University of Alberta

Constructing the "Teenage Girl": Idealized Images and Lived Experiences of the Telephone and Cellular Phone

by

Rachel Gillian Campbell

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

Department of Sociology

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Rachel Campbell

9707 145 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5N 2X1

Date: January 19, 2001

University of Alberta

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled Constructing the "Teenage Girl": Idealized Images and Lived Experiences of the Telephone and Cellular Phone submitted by Rachel Gillian Campbell in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Serra Tinic

Susan McDaniel

Anne Whitelaw

17 January 2001

Date

Abstract

Despite the widespread interest in youth, gender and technology, the intersection of the three has lacked analytical attention. In this thesis, attention is directed toward this intersection through the relationship between teenage girls and the telephone and cellular telephone. Using a framework that argues for understanding youth, gender and technology as discursively constructed, the ways in which these technologies become meaningful is addressed. This meaning is approached both from the perspective of that which is ideal, through advertising images, and that which is lived, through interviews with teenage girls. In doing so, the tensions between the ideal and the lived reveal a number of central themes, namely the division between public and private spheres, between independence and control, and between individuality and conformity. The two methods also enable an approach that attempts to overcome the subjectivist/objectivist split by the incorporation of both structure and agency so that, at the conclusion, the possibility of change and resistance can be addressed.

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Chapter One

Introduction

There seems to be, in North American society today, some natural and inextricable link between teenage girls and phones. As a relationship, it reflects all of our current cultural expectations of what it means to be a teenage girl. It is the opportunity to gossip and giggle, while learning the importance of communication and being supportive to one's future role as a woman. What we do not expect is for girls to be technologically adept. The telephone, however, is an exception, for over time it has been (re)defined as feminine through its connection with consumption and the private sphere of women. Yet the use girls make of the telephone is not like that of other feminine technologies, such as the washing machine or the vacuum cleaner. Girls do not have to be told or encouraged to use the phone. Girls, who are inundated with images of a dangerous public world by parents and media, come to accept this view of the street as "fact" and themselves as unprotected and vulnerable. Thus, they turn to the analog embrace of the telephone as the tool to reach beyond the sphere of the home, of parental control, and maintain the friendships that are central to their lives, from the safety of home and bedroom.

Today the boundaries between the public and private spheres, and between control and independence, are under a new form of attack by the cellular phone. It's flashy, it's slim - hell it can even vibrate. If the phone gave girls an aural glimpse into the outside world, the cellular phone presents the hope of a whole new reality. The teen girl, with a cell phone in her satchel, theoretically has the opportunity to enter the public world and remain safe. If technologies are meant to liberate us, if the Internet can release us from our corporeal form, then cannot the cellular phone release the teen girl from her parents' eye? Indeed, with this new technology it seems that the girl could be

as free as her brother; that she could roam wherever she pleases, for she has the cell phone to keep her in touch with home and safety. This idea is frequently presented in today's media:

> Cell phones: The electronic fun leash for teens ... But on the question of why this new teen accessory is needed, the two generations are at opposite ends: Parents envision it as an expansion of their protective eye. Can't locate the wandering teen? Just dial. But teenagers see the cell phone as a gift of freedom, a device that instantly connects them to their friends, parties and the latest gossip. (Wax 2000: E1)

The ways that the cellular phone is discussed in the media today have made it impossible to ignore the location of these technological objects in relationships of power. For the parent, the cellular phone is a tool of surveillance and knowledge. For the teen, the cellular phone is the gift of freedom and independence.

Paradoxically, it seems that just as a technology that can make the public world safe is introduced, the threats of the street, which are repeated and emphasized in the media, increase.

> Amid the confusion of yesterday's siege at a Littleton, Colo., high school, some students were able to contact parents, police and news media with cellular telephones. In the middle of deadly rampage, Kammi Vest hid in a closet and called her mother on a cell phone to tell her she was safe. ... For her, the phone was a godsend; other parents had to wait for hours to learn whether their children were among those injured or killed. ("Cellular Telephones Provide Link to Outside" 1999: www.seattletimes.com)

The above article, which continues by recounting the students' calls to the media and then the police, concludes with a statement from a spokeswoman for Southwestern Bell Wireless on the growth in the number of cell phones being purchased for teens: "When we ask why, a lot of them say it's for safety and security" ("Cellular Telephones Provide Link to Outside" 1999: www.seattletimes.com).

In contrast to the perception of the cellular phone as a tool to keep the user safe, when it is presented to teenage girls, it is constructed as a symbol of independence and coolness.

> It's not only the market's sheer size that makes young Americans an attractive target for the wireless industry. Today's teens have grown up using computers and other technology and -- having come of age in the prosperous 1990s -- have more disposable income than past generations. Active lifestyles also make it more difficult for today's teens to stay in touch with friends and parents -- an increasing concern for some families, especially in light of the recent rash of violence in the nation's high schools. ... The wireless industry is beginning to reach out to younger audiences with funky phones, hip advertisements, and low-cost or prepaid service plans. ... The younger market is where the big growth opportunity is. It's the combination of being very under-penetrated and very technically savvy. (Grice 1999: www.news.cnet.com)

The representations used to market to teen girls often blur with fashion layouts, their focus being supermodels, tiny phones, and pretty covers. There is nothing threatening in this world, for it is a reflection of idealizations and desires. Through these images the cellular phone, becomes the ultimate fashion accessory, for it symbolizes the girl's mobility, hipness and individuality. It is to these contradictions, between independence and control, between safety and fashion, between public and private, that I will direct my gaze in an attempt to explore the construction of the telephone and cellular telephone in relation to teenage girls.

Aims of the Project

This project has been guided by two questions: 1) What do the idealizations of the telephone and cellular phone, presented within advertising, reveal about expectations of being a teenage girl? 2) How do these representations of public/private sphere divisions and of parental control/independence relate to the lived experiences of the users of these technologies? The following research is my attempt to respond to these questions in order to fulfill the two main purposes that motivated me to pose them. The first was to explore the tensions between idealizations and experiences of technology. The second was to examine the impacts of traditional ideas of gender, age and technology on the experiences and ideals of teenage girls.

In attempting to answer these questions I have focused upon the cultural construction of technology, gender and youth, as suggested by Liesbet Van Zoonen (1992):

> Gender and technology are both constructed in discursive practices intersecting among others at the individual, social and symbolic levels, and producing particular and often contradictory 'results'. In other words, concrete implementations and applications of NICTs [new information and communication technologies] can be considered as sites of intersecting discourses that need to be accommodated and appropriated by, for instance, the individual user, network, organization or community involved in order for the NICT to make sense and acquire relevance. This - what I suggested calling 'cultural' understandings of gender and NICTs - implies that their interrelatedness can only be addressed by taking into account the particularities of the social and discursive context in which the interaction between gender and NICTs takes place. (Van Zoonen 1992: 27)

Through this focus upon the discursive construction of gender, youth and technology, the relationship between teenage girls and [cellular] telephones will be recognized not as determined but rather as continually shaped and supported. My aim will, in turn, be to show that the meanings of gender, youth and technology, which are currently presented as natural and determined, can be altered such that they contain much more egalitarian and politically pregnant meanings.

The telephone and cellular telephone, and how they are made meaningful to teenage girls, will be discussed through two methods: an analysis of advertisements and in-depth qualitative interviews. Through an analysis of advertising images of the telephone and cellular phone directed towards teenage girls, idealized presentations of what it means to be a teenage girl are examined and shifts in the constructed ideas of femininity and youth are questioned. The images that are presented in advertising, following the literature on consumer culture, are discussed because of the cues about the target audience's desired lifestyle that they are believed to contain. In turn, I have attempted to move beyond a position where teenage girls are seen as simply determined by society, through the inclusion of interviews. From these interviews, the

girls' uses of the technologies and readings of the advertisements have been reflected upon to draw out the tensions between that which is "ideal" and that which is "real".

Positioning the Research

The impetus for this project stemmed from three sources: an interest in technology and how it is made meaningful; a desire to explore the split between subjectivist and objectivist epistemologies in sociological theory; and a need to study something that was relevant to my own experience. It is the latter that I will address first, in an attempt to position myself within the work and to point out some of its limitations.

In my life there have been few relationships that have been as contested and varied as my interaction with the telephone. As a teen, the phone was my life. In interviewing girls and hearing their dismay at my positing the question "what would life be like without a phone", I went back to being fourteen, fifteen, sixteen when I would talk endlessly in my parents' basement, neck cramped, ear sore and voice hoarse. In retrospect, what those words were is a mystery. What did I have to say to the people whom, as my parents frequently reminded me, I had been with all day? Why, if I had so much to say, did I not just go and see them? The phone was, in many respects, my best friend, a relationship reflected in the marketing of Bell Telephones during the 1960s. The phone was always there, it was my tie to the outside world, linking my friends and I together, each isolated in our rooms, each pretending we were "just asking a question about homework". What "he" wore, what "she" said, what "they" did were all analyzed in detail. "But Mom! I'll just be five more minutes!" I pleaded for those minutes, for my minutes. Over time, my phone and I grew apart. It no longer served my

needs in the same way, indeed I no longer "needed" it. But what really changed? What was it about that time of life that led to my extensive use of the phone?

In questioning how we make technology meaningful, it was the telephone that seemed most relevant, because of both my own experiences and the popular conceptualizations of this technology as feminine. But in questioning this relationship between teen girls and the phone, and the stereotypes that surround it, the cellular phone kept surfacing. Indeed it seemed, in many ways that the two technologies were the perfect complement and contradiction to each other. Both linked you to family and home, but one forced you to physically remain there while the other presented the promise of unlimited movement. I imagine my own youth with a cellular and wonder if things would be different: would I have had more freedom, because of the constant ability to be reached or would it have meant greater restrictions? Would my parents' increased knowledge of my activities have changed what I did, or at least what I said I did?

As I began to pose these questions it became clear that the images of the phone and cellular phone presented in the media promoted a user very much as I was - young, middle class, well educated, white, heterosexual. Yet the use of these technologies by youth was almost invisible in the academic literature, particularly that of teens who were not male or white or middle/upper class. The research that follows presents an attempt to fill in one of these spaces through an exploration of how a particular set of technologies, the telephone and cellular phone, become meaningful in reference to a particular group of users: teenage girls.

My attempt to understand how these technologies become meaningful to teen girls in western society today originates from, and is limited by, my social location. I feel that it is particularly important to point out that this is not an 'objective' viewpoint given

that the two methods drawn upon in the research, the reading of advertising images and interviews with teenage girls, are both highly subjective.[1] The readings of both ads and interviews reflects my position, which was often conflicted between reminiscing about my teen years and an eye informed by academics, in particular feminist theory. It is in part, to problematize the dominance of my own perspective in this work that the girls' readings of the images and uses of the technologies have been incorporated. Despite this inclusion of the girls' voices, and my attempts to portray them as truthfully as possible, the analysis is, by my choice of quotations and my interpretations of what they suggest, shaped by my objectives and perspectives. I lay out these limits not to suggest that the work is inherently flawed, nor that more truthful research could be conducted, but to invite my audience to enter these texts, both advertising and interview, and search for their own meanings. Indeed, it is this instability, this impossibility to create a solid foundation or objective truth, that I would most like to leave with my reader. For if there is no "Truth" then we must recognize our situations as inherently alterable, despite how natural their construction may appear. Yet, by taking up a perspective that focuses on the constructed nature of technology, youth and gender - as the three central factors in this work - there remains, through the search for how these discursively constructed ideas shape our lived experiences, a strong recognition of the structures that exist and constrain our potential for agency.

Conceptualizing Gender, Youth, and Technology

The relationship between teenage girls and telephones/cellular phones exists at the intersection of discourses of gender, youth, and technology. In order to explore this

[1] This is not to suggest that I believe other frameworks would yield more objective results, but given the feminist orientation of the research, I do not want to hide that which may have influenced my interaction with the "data".

relationship these discourses must be briefly introduced. In doing this I want to begin by pointing out that each of these terms is inherently unstable, such that the objects/subjects which are seen to fall within their scope are recognized as being socially and historically situated.

Gender. The concept of gender has undergone numerous changes in shape and form within the academic discourse over time. Research into sex and gender originated from the debates in the 19th Century over the universality of the patriarchal family. Rosalind Coward (1983) has argued, that it is from these debates that a set of assumptions about the nature of gender were inherited, that continued essentially unchallenged, until the past half century. These assumptions have been that "sexual division is based on biological imperatives, that the sexes constitute two antagonistic interest groups, that the nuclear family based on procreation and material necessities is a natural human phenomenon, and that an essential, gendered individual exists" (cited in Rakow, 1986: 10). This essentialized notion of sex, as it is conceived in western society, is one in which "men are political and rational, while women are more personal, emotional and inclined to nurture" (Van Zoonen, 1992: 19).

The conception of gender as social project stems largely from Simone de Beauvoir's claim that "one is not born, but rather becomes a woman" (cited in Currie 1999: 3). In contrast to earlier beliefs that sexual differences, with the associated expectations of identity and social behavior, were natural and inherent, she argued that gender differences should be understood as historically and culturally constructed. The theory, which came to dominate early feminist sociology was that of sex-roles. This theory was particularly prominent within the field of mass communications where it was argued that "readers of social texts such as magazines and television, internalize

messages which are presented as 'scripts' of femininity" (Currie, 1999:4). Through the internalization of these images, which mandate the pursuit of physical beauty as the primary goal of women, the patriarchal relations of domination are obscured as women are led to believe in the importance of achieving perfected femininity. The cost of this focus on femininity, being equality (see Ferguson 1983; Wolf 1991).

Recent gender theorists have pointed out a number of flaws within sex-role theory. The theory of sex-roles, because of its emphasis on the learned and culturally constructed nature of gender, suggests that a change in media content and the representation of women in media would lead to a change in gender relations. This belief is problematic in two central ways. First, as Rakow (1986) points out, this "assumes ... that there could be some veridical account of social life in the media, that it is possible for the media to be a mirror rather than always a construction of some kind of reality" (16). Secondly, and more importantly, sex-role theory in assuming that changing the images of women is unproblematic, presupposes that gender is unproblematic. Gender identities, rather than being static as sex-role theory suggests, are constantly being negotiated. This can be seen, for example, as "women make conscious decisions to wear (or not wear) make-up, thoughtfully choose the wardrobes through which they make their public presence, and so on" (Currie 1999, 4).

The notion of gender to be used in the following work will be one that attempts to move beyond binary conceptions of male/female and of nature/culture. Following de Lauretis (1987) gender will be seen not as a inherent property of the body but as the "product and process of various social technologies, institutional discourses, epistemologies, and critical practices, as well as practices of daily life" (cited in Terry & Calvert 1997:1). Thus, the way in which an individual is gendered, is not, de Lauretis writes:

> By sexual difference alone, but rather across languages and cultural representations: a subject engendered in the experience of race and class, as well as sexual, relations; a subject therefore, not unified but rather multiple, and not so much divided as contradicted. (cited in Van Zoonen 1992: 20)

Thus an individual's gender, rather than being understood as a fixed and inherent property, is conceived of as a part of the constitution of a subject in conjunction with numerous other social locations. Gender can, therefore, be understood as a discursive concept that is "inscribed in the subject along with other discourses, such as those of ethnicity, class and sexuality, in a variety of cultural practices" (Van Zoonen, 1992: 20). The discourses of gender, which arise from particular economic, social, political and technological contexts, may both overlap and simultaneously contradict one another. Importantly, what they do hold is the ability to "close off possibilities ... that is, a discourse, as a ready-made way of thinking, can rule out alternative ways of thinking and hence preserve a particular distribution of power" (Abercrombie et al. 1994: 120).

Framing gender as discursive does not, however, mean that it is not "real" in its impacts and effects. As Mary Poovey (1988) states:

> On the one hand, we need to recognize that 'woman' *is* currently ... a position within a dominant, binary symbolic order *and* that that position is arbitrarily (and falsely) unified. On the other hand, we need to remember that there *are* concrete historical women whose differences reveal the inadequacy of this unified category in the present and the past. The multiple positions real women occupy - the positions dictated by race, for example, or by class or sexual preference - should alert us to the inadequacy of binary logic and unitary selves without making us forget that this logic *has* dictated (and still does) some aspects of women's treatment. (62; emphasis in original)

'Woman' as a category, while seen as falsely unifying women, is simultaneously recognized as a discursive construct that has defined the lived experiences of women. It is the latter point that must be recognized to enable a political reading of the texts, for it highlights that, despite the diversity among women, the category 'woman' still shapes subjects' interactions. The category must, therefore, be invoked in the deconstruction of

texts so that its impacts and the interests that it conceals can be highlighted (Currie 1999: 117). In terms of the following study, this discursive conceptualization of gender will be drawn upon in exploring how teenage girls are defined by commercial texts as properly interacting with two technological objects – the telephone and the cellular telephone. The ways in which these imperatives are played out in the beliefs and behaviors of a set of teenage girls will also be examined in exploring the impacts that gendered ideals have on teenage girls today.

Youth

> If you ask any adolescent girl to describe herself, you will probably obtain a range of responses. She may say "I am a girl, I'm 15, I'm African (Japanese, Latina) American, I'm a high school junior, a soccer player, a choir singer, a friend." She may also describe herself as short, chubby and dark haired. She thinks of herself as kind, responsible, and a good listener, but at times feels sad, lonely, and confused. (Johnson, Richards and Worell 1999:21)

The concept of "youth" relies upon a cultural differentiation based on perceptions of age. This differentiation, for Western Europeans, did not begin to develop until the nineteenth century. Drotner (1983) states that it was class, rather than age or gender, which had been the major factor in grouping people throughout the early stages of the industrial revolution. For the working-class, the idea that childhood "was a natural phase of dependence, a training for 'real', that is adult, life" (35) did not exist. Indeed, the conceptualization of adolescence, youth, or teen years[2], did not arise until the middle to end of the nineteenth century.[3]

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[2] Problematically each of these terms contains a slightly altered emphasis. The idea of adolescence, for example, is more directly associated with changes in the physiology and psychology of the individual, and is frequently used to suggest a period of individual crises (Aaploa 1997: 4). Youth, within academia, has been tied to ideas of youth culture and conceptualizations of the age group as forming a coherent social category (or a number of categories) (Abercrombie et.al. 1994: 465). Teenager is a term taken up more frequently within popular discourse then academic discourse, often with connotations of trouble and social disturbance (Fiske 1994, 190).

[3] This date, however, is contested by some historians who claim that specialized youth groups can be traced back to at least the sixteenth century in France (Abercrombie et al. 1994: 7).

Throughout the latter part of the twentieth century, social and psychological theories of childhood and adolescence prospered and became institutionalized. The separation of adolescent from adult, like that of woman from man, was initially conceptualized through the binary of nature/culture. This was largely due to the work of Stanley Hall who argued in his *Psychology of Adolescence* (1905) that "the development of the individual recapitulates that of society, and both consist in an evolution from a state of primitive wildness to one of civilized maturity" (cited in Cohen 1997: 184). This division, although not stated so directly, remains the foundation for many conceptualizations of adolescence. For example, Aapola (1997) states that the "dominant cultural representations of adolescence define it as an individual crisis; rapid physical changes being followed by mental instability and possibly also social conflicts" (4). In defining youth it is this type of perspective that relies upon an "apparent symmetry between biological and social processes" that has led to the conflation of age as a biological process with the experience of age as historically and culturally relative (Wyn and White 1997: 9).

This (mis)representation of the biological as the social, parallels the dynamics of traditional conceptualizations of gender. The adolescent, always seen in relation to adulthood, is always the inferior: immature, dependent and unstable. The individual's chronological age becomes his/her defining characteristic that restricts him/her from being positioned as equal, just as a woman's physiological sex renders her subordinate. Similar developments also exist in the manner in which age and gender have been theorized, according to Wyn and White (1997). Age, like gender, was initially framed through a set of static universal categories that have more recently been challenged by relational ideas based on power relations. Thus approaches, which have framed youth

as a category that relies upon similarities based on age, have been critiqued as being ahistorical and static:

> A categorical approach tends to rest on the assumption that the similarities amongst the age category are more significant than the differences, taking masculine, white, middle class experiences as the norm. It offers little grasp of the ways in which the experience of growing up is a process, negotiated by young people as well as being imposed on them. (Wyn and White 1997: 13)

As youth are homogenized in academic, medical and popular discourses, the cultural and social backgrounds that differentiate individuals from one another are overlooked. In contrast, an approach that focuses on the nature of youth as discursively constructed, as historical and socially located, enables work that draws out the multiplicity of lived experiences possible, while simultaneously questioning the power relations involved. By taking an approach to youth that focuses upon discourses one quickly becomes aware of the numerous, and often contradictory, ways in which it is defined. Cohen (1997), for example, writes:

> Youth is simultaneously constituted as a place and time of marginality and powerlessness *and* as the bearer of a whole series of special symbolic powers. As a legal subject-form within a patriarchal order youth is a category of disqualification, a mere locus of lacks. But as a commodity form, manufactured by the consciousness industries, youth is a veritable cornucopia of desirable properties. (225)

Conceptualizing youth, therefore, simultaneously invokes notions of youth as deviance; youth as subculture/resistance; youth as commodity (see Wyn & White 1997).

It is through these contradictory discourses presented by the media, educators and academics, that youth are constructed in western society today. In stating this, however, I do not wish to suggest that because "youth" is discursively constructed that it does not impact young people. Rather, as Wyn and White argue:

> Being a 'young person' does have real implications, but its meaning is tied to historical and specific circumstances and the ways in which relations of social division are played out. 'Youth', then, is an historical construct which gives certain aspects of the biological and social experience of growing up their meaning. (Wyn and White 1997: 3)

Being a "youth" is not only constructed, but like gender, impacts the experiences of those to whom it refers. For the teenage girl life exists at the intersection of these two discourses, which often conflict. Yet, as constructed as these categories may be and as much as I will critique and highlight the extent to which their meanings need to be constantly bolstered, it must be noted that they remain categories to which the girls strongly identify. They are categories that, however constructed, are meaningful to both the girls and society in general.

> I don't know, um, if I saw the ad in a magazine - I've seen this on billboards. That's kind of cool the "attention teenage girls" - I don't know. That's actually kind of made me want to buy one. ... Just its talking right to me sort of thing as a teenage girl, and also I like the look of the phone ... (Victoria, 15)

Technology

Before describing how I am defining or theorizing technology as discursive, I would like to provide a disclaimer. Unlike gender and age, which are categories that we can imagine as non-existent or as holding very different meanings than they currently do, there are aspects of technologies that are non-discursive; aspects of technology that have very concrete impacts upon individuals and their social realities[4] (Van Zoonen 1992: 22). Despite this difference, I will argue that it is necessary to put the constructed nature of technology at the forefront in order to conduct an analysis that aims to understand the cultural associations between gender and technology, and youth and technology.

Historical perspectives on technology reach as far back as the work of Plato, who wrote of the invention of letters through a conversation between Socrates and

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[4] In discussing these non-discursive aspects of technology, Van Zoonen draws upon "the case with the internationalization of labor made possible by telematics and resulting in the exploitation and displacement of women in Third World countries who provide cheap labor" (22).

Phaedrus. Here Socrates tells the story of Theuth's invention of letters for the King Thamus:

> Theuth said, "This invention, O King, will make the Egyptians wiser and give them better memories; I have discovered a remedy both for the memory and for wisdom." Thamus replied: "O most ingenious Theuth, the parent of inventor of an art is not always the best judge of the utility or inutility of his own inventions to the users of them. ... For this discovery of yours will create forgetfulness in the minds of those who learn to use it; they will not exercise their memories, but, trusting in external, foreign marks, they will not bring things to remembrance from within themselves...." (Plato, trans. Irvine 1996: 2)

Two central trends in the understanding of technology are pointed to in this excerpt from Plato. The first is a deterministic perspective where the technology is believed to have an autonomous effect on society (often beyond the knowledge of its creator) and the second is the tendency of people to expect positive outcomes and advances from all new technology.

The first of these trends, technological determinism, is clearly reflected in the work of Marshall McLuhan, who contended that all media exert a compelling influence on people and society. According to McLuhan all technologies have the "Midas touch" such that "whenever a society develops an extension of itself, all other functions of that society tend to be transmuted to accommodate that new form" (McLuhan 1969: 7). This statement, which exemplifies a technological determinist position, highlights the belief that technological change is autonomous, or beyond society, and that it *causes* social change (MacKenzie and Wajcman 1985). What this perspective undermines are two crucial factors: "[that] the characteristics of a society play a major part in deciding which technologies are adapted. ... [And] that the same technology can have very different 'effects' in different situations" (MacKenzie and Wajcman 1985: 6). Raymond Williams (1975) has similarly argued against a deterministic theory of technology because the original intent and purposes of a technology can never wholly predict its uses or effects. Rather, he states, it is "best to think of a technology as an intention and an effect of a

particular social order, developing in relation to social and cultural definitions, and never wholly determined by them" (cited in Rakow 1986: 38).

The second tendency in the study of technology which Socrates speech to Phaedrus illustrates are our overly optimistic ideas of new technologies as having the potential to make our lives radically better - an optimism that Socrates suggests may be misplaced. This pessimism towards technology is also reflected in much of the research into technology, particularly the work of ecofeminists who believe that technology is a reflection of masculine control (a position that will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 2). Rather than either viewpoint, which have more recently been termed technomanic (technology=progress=good) and technophobic (technology=destruction of nature=dangerous) (Stabile 1994), I will take up that technology has no inherent nature, either good or bad. In contrast, it is the social context into which a particular technology is introduced, that gives it meaning. Carolyn Marvin (1988), for example, writes:

> Early uses of technological innovations are essentially conservative because their capacity to create social disequilibrium is intuitively recognized amidst declarations of progress and enthusiasm for the new. People often imagine that, like Michelangelo chipping away at the block of marble, new technologies will make the world more nearly what it was meant to be all along. Inevitably, both change and the contemplation of change are reciprocal events that expose old ideas to revision from contact with new ones (235).

Technologies, regardless of how new and radical the potentials they possess may *seem*, inevitably fall into categories and understandings of social life that are already present. For, as consumers of technologies bring the tools into their everyday lives, the objects are generally put to essentially conservative uses. This process, which has been termed "domesticating" technology, exemplifies how technologies are made to 'fit' peoples' lives and thus become meaningful in connection with already existing ideas of gender, age, race, etc. Hence, the conservative nature of this use, as Silverstone and Haddon (1996) argue, forces us to recognize that the meanings and significance of

technologies depend upon a "complex pattern of activities in which producers and consumer-users, as well as those who intervene in and facilitate the process of consumption, take part" (44).

This constructed meaning is also illustrated in the work of MacKenzie and Wajcman (1985) who argue that there are three layers of meaning to a technology. The first is the physical artifact or object, which only becomes a technology through the second layer, the surrounding human activity. The third layer of meaning is systematic human knowledge - the know-how about how to use, design, and repair the technology. Consequently, technology can be understood as a cultural text that is given meaning by its context:

> Technology itself can be seen as a text ... in the sense that it is surrounded by convictions and prescriptions about its relevance for society, the benefits for its users, the appropriate way of using it, etc. In other words there is a discourse of technology - often originating from the context of manufacture and marketing - that produces its meaning and relevance in everyday life and that often contains a gendered subtext. (Van Zoonen 1992: 23)

Through a conceptualization of technology as text, one is able to take into account both the meanings constructed around the artifact, while allowing for some degree of structural determination inherent to the form of the technology. As with other texts, technologies are encoded - both physically in design and symbolically in aesthetic and marketing - and are decoded, or read, by consumers (MacKay 1997). Following Hall (1980) technologies can be seen as encoded with preferred readings through the design process, yet a multiplicity of other alternative readings exist. Thus, MacKay (1997) writes "we can say that technologies vary in their degree of openness or closedness, in the degree to which they can be used for purposes which differ from the intentions of the designer" (270). There are, through these multiple readings, the possibilities for uses that are resistive to what was initially intended and therefore potentially transformative. A strong example of this, to be explored in detail in Chapter 2, is the use

that women made of the phone within the home which was in opposition to the business oriented purposes for which the phone was initially developed and marketed.

David Noble has referred to this space, between the intended and the actual uses, as the 'double life' of technology. He states:

> Close inspection of technological development reveals that technology leads a double life, one which conforms to the intentions of designers and interests of power and another which contradicts them - proceeding behind the backs of their architects to yield unintended consequences and unanticipated possibilities (cited in MacKay 1997: 274)

Thus, rather than view technology in a narrow, determined way, the following work will frame it as contextual and discursively constructed. However, this does not mean that technology is understood as having no impacts, no "effects", but rather that its effects cannot be understood in terms of simple cause and effect. In this research, therefore, the meanings of the technologies are framed as possibilities that have been "chosen", by users, producers and marketers, as those that best "fit" with their lived experiences and idealizations. Crucially these are meanings that reflect the power relations embedded in the construction of gender and age.

Methods

In researching this project two methods, a deep reading of advertising images and face-to-face interviews, were used to explore the tensions between the lived experiences and idealized images of teenage girls' use of the telephone and cellular phone. Together the two methods reflect an attempt to recognize both the fractured and individualistic nature of life, while attending to the surrounding social influences and impacts. In line with one of my central motivations in undertaking this research, these dual methods enabled me to overcome, to some extent, the division between subjectivist and objectivist perspectives. Finally, the combination created a way in which

I could view technology, gender and youth not as determined, but as meaningful through a number of contexts (marketing and use) and voices (the girls and my own).

The first method used was an analysis of advertising images to explore the messages and idealizations used to market and promote the cellular phone and telephone. In doing this approximately 125 images were collected, the majority being from 1998-2000, with several from each decade since 1960. By including this selection of advertisements from the past forty years, the ways in which the gendered ideals of technological use have both continued and changed can be addressed, illustrating how the meanings attached to the images are historically and culturally relative. With the exception of some of the recent images, all the advertisements appeared in fashion and beauty magazines targeted towards young women, what Dawn Curie has referred to as "teenzines" (1999). The selected images include both advertisements directly for the telephone/cellular phone and ads for other products that use them as signifiers.

The rationale behind choosing to focus on advertising images is not based on the belief that advertisements reflect reality, nor that they force people to do particular things. Rather advertising images were taken up because they are a crucial aspect of western culture at the current time, an aspect that impacts the ways in which we use consumer products. This is particularly important given the focus of this project upon the culturally constructed nature of technology. If technology is to be framed in this way marketing must be recognized as one of the contexts that renders it meaningful, in ways that are frequently gendered and aged, as Van Zoonen suggests (1992:23). Leiss, Kline and Jhally (1990), for example, state:

> Advertising is not just a business expenditure undertaken in the hope of moving some merchandise off the store shelves, but is rather an *integral part of modern culture*. Its creations appropriate and transform a vast range of symbols and ideas; its unsurpassable communicative powers recycle cultural models and references back through the networks of social interactions. (emphasis added, 6)

Advertisements, therefore, become a medium for the creation of wants and experimentation with identity in a consumer culture. Following this, Robert Goldman (1992) has argued that advertisements are important because they work upon their ability to invite us, as readers, to step into the place of the model and "try on the social self we might become if we wore the product image" (3). Advertisers, it must be noted, act in a very purposeful manner when constructing these images. Two objects are not "accidentally" related in ads (although their meanings can never be completely controlled so the readings may be variable). They are chosen because of the meanings which they are expected to imply to audiences at a particular historical moment. "Images produced and organized around a particular referent are not random or complete in themselves and do not actually signify that referent, but are fundamentally and inextricably related to the material basis of our society" (Williamson 1978: 144). The analysis of the advertisements for the telephone and cellular phone will, therefore, highlight the ideals that teen girls are expected to desire at a particular historical moment.

These advertisements have been analyzed in a manner that draws upon their ideological meanings through a semiotic reading. This reading is one that aims to answer the question: "How is meaning reconstituted both by advertisers and viewers of messages?" (Leiss et al. 1990: 200). One of the most influential pieces of research on the semiotics of advertising is Judith Williamsons' *Decoding Advertisements* (1978). This work is organized around the idea that "ads provide a structure which is capable of transforming the language of objects into that of people and vice versa" (12). Advertisements, she argues, come to gain latent meanings through a process where: a) the meaning of the signifier, through the correlation of two things, is transferred from one sign to the other; b) this relies upon an audience/reader who is active in making the

connection between the two things (maybe be bodies, products, places, etc); c) it requires that the first object has a significance to be transferred (19). Over time these links in meaning come to take on an objective or independent status, what Williamson terms the "objective correlative" (29). Because the system appears to be made up of "logical" connections and similarities it is read as "real" or "natural". The aim in deconstructing ads, therefore, is to try and break apart these "natural" and "logical" connections to show the ways in which they are formulated and what power relations they draw upon.

In analyzing gender and advertising, Erving Goffman (1979), for example, draws upon semiotics to explore the ways that gender is stereotyped in advertising images. He argues that the portrayals found are truncated versions of reality, but they are not strange to readers because they draw upon ideas and rituals that are already well established to ensure that they are "read" the right way. "If anything, advertisers conventionalize our conventions, stylize what is already a stylization, make frivolous use of what is already something considerably cut off from contextual controls. Their hype is hyper-ritualization" (84). In turn, by questioning the images, by pulling apart their meanings, we are able to directly address stereotypes and the power relations they involve. A further discussion of this method and the manner in which the advertisements were chosen is included in the appendix.

The second method involved a series of in-depth qualitative interviews. Here uses of the telephone and cellular phone were explored through a set of eleven face-to-face, semi-standardized interviews with girls aged 14 through 17. Through these interviews, which were held in a conversational style and followed up different themes, I talked with the girls about both the home phone and cellular phone. Although not all of the girls had their own cellular phones, they were also questioned about the technology.

The participants were also asked to read and discuss a selection of advertisements for phones and cellular phones from the 1960s to today. The advertisements were introduced into the interviews to explore what they believed the ads to be promoting and whether these ideals had relevance to their lived experiences. Despite attempts to include girls from different backgrounds, both racial and class, the majority of the girls came from very similar backgrounds, with the majority having professional parents and a white, Anglo-Saxon heritage. This lack of variety has restricted my ability to have a range of voices included in the analysis as I had desired, nevertheless the opinions represented were diverse. It is also important to highlight that, although the interviews were limited in number, and therefore are neither representative nor generalizable in any sense, I would maintain that there is nothing to suggest that these girls were not 'typical'.

During the interviews a number of themes were consistently addressed, yet there were a good number of other issues discussed, depending on the individual. The general themes were: (1) the extent of the girls' use of the technologies, particularly in terms of time and type of use; (2) the girls' relationships to parents or guardians in terms of ownership and expectations of the technology, and also restrictions on time spent "out" with friends; (3) what associations of popularity and/or image are attached to the cellular phone; (4) what expectations there are for how boys/girls will use the technologies/own the technologies; (5) what impact they perceive their gender has upon their lived experiences. Further discussion of the methods employed in the interviews and the background of the girls interviewed is included in the appendix.

Thesis Outline

This introductory chapter has presented the topic and aims of this thesis, namely the desire to explore the relationship between the telephone/cellular phone and teenage girls in a way that addresses the tensions between the idealizations of advertising and the uses in lived experience. Through a perspective that frames gender, youth, and technology as contextual and constructed one is presented with a recognition of the possibility for the discourses, and their intersections, to be defined in different (and potentially more egalitarian) ways. Yet, the impact that these discourses have upon lived experience must never be underestimated. Through this conceptualization of the relationship between teenage girls and these technologies as constructed, there is a potential to overcome the split between a subjectivist and objectivist perspective. For it forces a recognition of both the structures that constrain, while never negating the subject's potential for resistance and agency. The desire to overcome this split is also a central motivation behind the dual methods of a semiotic analysis of advertising and qualitative interviews, which together question both hegemonic ideals and individual experiences of gender, youth and technology.

In Chapter 2, "Boys versus Girls", the intersection of gender and technology is the focus. In this chapter, two of the most influential theories of gender and technology, liberal feminist and ecofeminist, are introduced and critiqued. A perspective, which focuses upon the construction of technology as masculine, is presented as an alternative to the individuality and essentialism that respectively plague each of the earlier theories. Through this perspective it is posited that women's limited interaction with technology is not a matter of choice, nor of biology, but is an outcome of the location of technology in the public sphere and the definition of technical skills as masculine. To highlight this constructionist perspective the "double life" of the telephone

is discussed, particularly its shift from the public to domestic sphere. An analysis of the continuities and changes in the presentation of gender ideals in advertising images from the 1960s to today, is drawn upon to illustrate how traditional ideas are continually portrayed in new ways. In turn, these ideals are related to lived experience, where ideas of what is natural are relied upon in explaining why the technologies are taken up differently by males and females.

The focus of Chapter 3, "The Telephone and the Culture of the Bedroom", is a further questioning of the factors that lead to the perceived masculinization of technology, particularly the division between public and private spheres. The importance of the division between the spheres is addressed in two ways. Firstly, as that which makes girls' experiences of being a young person different from boys, and secondly, as a central motivation for girls to take up the telephone. Through an examination of advertisements it is discussed how, although there is a shift in the emphasis of the images, the gender ideals that underscore the representations remain fundamentally traditional. The ways in which the telephone is taken up within the private sphere is questioned for the potential it creates for a private, independent space for girls who are highly monitored by their parents.

Chapter 4, "Safety and Aural Surveillance", turns to the ways in which the cellular phone is constructed through two conflicting discourses: the parental discourse of safety and the youth discourse of individuality. Through an integration of Foucualt's work, particularly his ideas of power and discipline, the ways in which the phone is used by parents to monitor, and thereby control, their daughter's actions are identified. This power, however, is understood not as determined and top-down, but as potentially resisted through the girls' (mis)use of the object in the assertion of their independence.

The fifth chapter, "Individualizing and Accessorizing", again takes up Foucault. Whereas the last chapter focused upon synoptic visibility as a disciplining practice, this chapter emphasizes the individualizing discourse of the case. The paradoxical tensions that pull upon girls to be both individual and "fit in" are addressed through a comparison of the ways in which advertisements target girls, both as a part of a collective and as a unique individual. This idea is in turn related back to the divisions between structure and agency, and between external pressures and the individual ability to choose.

The concluding chapter aims to tie all of these ideas and theories back together and relate some of the idealizations and experiences of teenage girls today. In turn, these themes are compared to those of the past forty years and the degree to which the ideals have remained stable is questioned. The focus, however, is upon the discursive nature of the youth, gender and technology, and the tensions between lived experiences and idealizations, which together highlight the structural impact and the potential for agency. In conclusion, by accepting that these discourses are socially constructed, and are therefore alterable, the potential for change and resistance is presented.

Chapter Two

Boys versus Girls

One of the main influences upon teenage girls' use of the telephone and cellular phone is the way in which gender and technology are understood in the larger society. In this chapter, I will introduce the two theories that have been most influential in understanding gender and technology: liberal feminism and ecofeminism. Although many other theories have been applied in exploring how technology and gender interrelate, it is from these two perspectives that the interaction was studied in the most detail, particularly during the period before 1990. These theories also approach the issue from polarized perspectives: for liberal feminism individual agency is the key, whereas for ecofeminism patriarchal structures are the focus. Both of these theoretical perspectives will be critiqued and drawn upon in developing a viewpoint that presents technology and gender as meaningful through historical and social context. This perspective will attempt to balance the benefits of both theories, such that the individual can retain some degree of agency, while still attending to the weight of the social structures that surround them.

Traditionally the manner in which technology is constructed is masculine. The telephone serves as one of the few exceptions to this, therefore, I will begin by introducing how it was feminized within a masculine culture of technology. It will be argued that this feminization is primarily due to the telephone's location within the private sphere. The uses for which it was taken up will be shown to be 'feminine' by social definition. These uses will, in turn, be used to relate the appeal of the technology to teenage girls. In questioning the definition of the telephone as feminine, a number of advertising images from *Seventeen* magazine that have appeared over the last forty years of girls and phones will be analyzed. How a gendered use was constructed in

these idealized images will be explored in relation to its socio-historical context. Whether the images of the cellular phone are perpetuating or challenging these ideals will also be addressed. The chapter will close with the opinions of teenage girls that were gathered through interviews. How girls frame their use of the telephone and cellular phone, and how this is different or the same as what they perceive their male peers' use to be, will be discussed. These perceptions will also be related back to the ideals in the images to argue for the power of these constructed ideas in impacting what is deemed 'natural' and acceptable.

Theories of Gender and Technology

In many societies, including that of contemporary North America, it is commonly expected, if not assumed, that men make machines and, if deemed culturally acceptable, women use them. From our introduction to science and technology as children, we are taught these gendered ideals: textbooks teach of the men who invented electricity and cars and phones; in our homes we learn that it is dad who fixes the sink and mom who fills the dishwasher. The ways in which children take up technology can, in turn, be seen to originate in these masculine images of it. Boys make model cars; girls put Barbie in them. For girls growing up in western culture it is these gendered conceptualizations of technology to which they are exposed and upon which they may be modeling their own behavior. These cultural associations of masculinity and technology, however, operate not only in popular assumptions but also within academia (Gill and Grint 1995: 3). As Arnold and Faulkner (1985), write:

> To talk about women and technology in the same breath seems strange, even incongruous. Technology is powerful, remote, incomprehensible, inhuman, scientific, expensive and - above all - male. What does it have to do with women? (1)

Despite the prevalence of ideas that technology is masculine, it must be remembered that this is not an innate relationship. It can be seen that technology is not inherently masculine in the active roles women have played throughout history as technical creators and innovators. Several feminist anthropologists and historians have, in fact, made the case that women were at the forefront of technological innovation (Rakow 1988: 45). Autumn Stanley (1995), for example, reports on the importance of women's ideas and inventions to such areas as the development of agriculture and primary machines, reproductive technologies, and computer related technologies. Indeed, Stanley argues that of the five primary simple machines - the wedge, the lever, the pulley, the screw and the inclined plane - "women used and probably invented all or most of them in prehistoric or early historic times" (285). Thus, despite the overwhelming masculinity of our daily experience of technology, it should not be framed as inherently male.

How technology has come to be deemed masculine began to be questioned by feminist researchers in the 1970s. In their writing two polarized perspectives were presented. The first, liberal feminism, framed technology as male dominated through performed and symbolic means and focused upon the role of individual agency. The second, ecofeminism, held that technology, because it is part of society, is inherently masculine/patriarchal.

Liberal Feminism

Much of the research into gender and technology has centered on the low numbers of women within the technical fields, such as engineering and computing science. The solution to the problem put forward by many policy groups is to persuade girls to enter into the sciences. For example, on the University of Alberta campus a

program called Women in Scholarship, Engineering, Science and Technology (WISEST) gives high school girls the opportunity for summer jobs on campus in disciplines that are not traditionally female, such as biochemistry and engineering (www.chem.ualberta.ca/~wisest/). The aim of the program is that through this exposure the girls will learn to find the sciences interesting and not be intimidated by their masculine image. Once girls have chosen to take the "hard" courses, the liberal feminist position argues, they will begin to "catch up" with the information society and overcome their stereotyped gender roles as homemakers and mothers.

Despite the many initiatives that have been taken to encourage girls into these non-traditional areas, such as that of WISEST discussed above, the changes have been limited. This continuation of technology and science as masculine can be read as a reflection of a number of theoretical and strategic problems with liberal feminist analyses (Gill and Grint 1995; Van Zoonen 1992). One criticism that has been raised of liberal feminism is that technology is not subjected to critical analysis (Karpf 1987, cited in Gill and Grint 1995). Technology is "thought of as an independent factor affecting social relations without being affected by them" (Van Zoonen 1992: 14). A technology, like the phone, is merely an object that enables a certain thing, in this case communication, to happen more easily. What expectations exist for how the telephone is used and by whom are not considered as being a reflection or an outcome of the social and cultural milieu. Rather technology is understood as neutral and independent of all ideological shaping by power relations.

Within liberal feminism the reason for the lack of change in relations between gender and technology, if the technology is entirely neutral, must be a lack of individual action. To liberal feminists all people are seen as equal on the basis of rationality. As Van Zoonen (1992) states "liberal feminism assumes - with liberalism in general - that

human beings distinguish themselves by their capacity for rationality and the exercise of rationality in public life" (13). The responsibility is therefore on the individual to act in a rational manner. Thus it is women who are framed as the problem "because of their reticence, reluctance or outright refusal to become involved in technology" (Van Zoonen 1992:14). Although arguing that gender roles should be abolished because they are a distortion of reality, liberal feminists have, paradoxically, focused largely on the female gender role as that which is inferior and needs to be changed. Thereby they treat the male role as the norm that women should adopt (Gill and Grint 1995: 7). Thus, it is argued that women need to enter the hard sciences and learn traditionally masculine skills, such as computer programming, not that males should learn telephone skills and cooking techniques. The power relations between the males and females that have led to the valuing of some activities over others is ignored.

A number of positive features, nevertheless, can be taken from the work of liberal feminists. The most crucial is their theorizing of stereotyping and socialization which acknowledge "the influence of society on individual identities and seems just a step away from the idea that identity is not predetermined but socially constructed" (Van Zoonen 1992:15). Through sex roles liberal feminists present a way to see gender as socially constructed. At the same time, their focus on agency draws attention to the potential for individual action. Unfortunately, however, the reliance on a predetermined rational being leaves little room to understand 'irrational' choices, particularly the choices of those impacted by different lived experiences such as class, race and sexuality.

Ecofeminism

The second theoretical approach frequently used by feminists studying women and technology is ecofeminism. This perspective originates from a diametrically

opposed metatheoretical position where the concern is upon social structures rather than individual agency. The pivotal idea for ecofeminism is that women are closer to nature than men. This perspective frames technology as a product of masculinity developed to dominate nature. This domination is seen to parallel that of men over women. "We believe that the desire of men to control women is closely associated with their desire to control, rather than to cooperate with nature - a philosophy which lies behind modern scientific thinking" (Zmrocsek et al., 1987 cited in Van Zoonen 1992:15). The root of ecofeminism is the belief that women's biology, as closer to nature, has given them a way of knowing and experiencing the world based on "female values" of pacifism and nurturance (Gill and Grint 1995: 5).

Van Zoonen (1992) argues that the contribution of ecofeminism to understanding the relationship between women and new technologies has been invaluable, despite its many theoretical failings. What ecofeminism highlights is "the social (i.e. patriarchal) context of the design and production of technology, and makes it clear how much social values and patterns associated with technology are at odds with what is currently understood as 'feminine'" (17). Unlike liberal feminism, which framed the gender inequality of technology in terms of the motivations of individual women and girls, ecofeminism brings the gender politics of technology to the forefront. In looking at computers, for example, ecofeminism would highlight the corporate world from which the technology originates, and then the male world of 'tinkering' into which it entered. Thus the technology is not seen as an independent factor, but is meaningful because of its context. "Ultimately, however, the essentialism of eco-feminism, its inability to deal with change and its reproduction of traditional ideas about femininity - albeit in celebratory terms - make it flawed as a theoretical perspective and disempowering as a political one" (Gill and Grint 1995: 5).

One of the central problems with ecofeminism is its association of femininity with nature. In doing this the social and cultural constructions of 'masculinity' and 'femininity' are ignored through the assertion of an inner essence of 'being woman'. Moreover, the values that they have chosen to uphold as essentially feminine are precisely those that other feminists have aimed to show as contingent. "Women value nurturance, warmth and security, or at least we believe we ought to, precisely because of, not in spite of, the meanings, culture and social relations of a world where men are more powerful than women" (Segal 1987, cited in Wajcman 1991:9). In addition to this essentialist conceptualization of individuals where biology is destiny, ecofeminism presents a deterministic idea of technology. Unlike the liberal feminist perspective, which framed technology as neutral and independent of society, ecofeminists see technology as inherently patriarchal because it is a product of patriarchal society. Society and technology are thus conflated such that no space is left for the possibility of negotiation or resistance (Van Zoonen 1992: 17).

Politically what ecofeminism produces are gender prescriptions equally as disciplining as those of its patriarchal counterparts. Females who do enjoy technology and master its uses "must suffer from a split personality and false consciousness: her use of technology is at odds with her 'true' feminine nature, and makes her collaborate in her own oppression" (Van Zoonen 1992: 18). The telephone and cellular phone, therefore, because they were developed and are used in a patriarchal society, would be seen by ecofeminists as a perversion of nature. As such any use of the objects by women for communication would be a denial of their true femininity which is tied to their biology. The idea that telephones and cellular phones may be used in a beneficial manner and that their meanings and uses could be contested would be rejected outright. Indeed these technologies must be rejected for they are tools that enable men

to overcome the demands of nature that require face-to-face communication. The ecofeminist, because of the strongly structural nature of her approach, is therefore left with little alternative than the outright rejection of technology.

Construction of technology

> Media are not fixed natural objects; they have no natural edges. They are constructed complexes of habits, beliefs, and procedures embedded in elaborate cultural codes of communication. The history of media is never more or less than the history of their uses, which always lead us away from them to the social practices and conflicts they illuminate. New media, broadly understood to include the use of new communications technology for new or old purposes, new ways of using old technologies, and, in principle, all other possibilities for the exchange of social meaning, are always introduced into a pattern of tension created by the coexistence of old and new, which is far richer than any single medium that becomes a focus of interest because it is novel. (Marvin 1988:8)

Both liberal feminist and ecofeminist approaches suffer from their tendency towards essentialism and their extreme positions on the agency/structure dichotomy. To overcome these problems I will present, as an alternative, a constructivist understanding of technology. A constructivist position posits that in order to understand technology we need to question the culture that surrounds it and shapes it. Through this questioning, the meanings that a technology has can be framed as an outcome of the social surroundings. Unlike liberal feminism, technology is not seen as neutral, but neither is it inherently patriarchal as ecofeminism suggests.

In answer to the key question of gender and technology, why is technology associated with males and not females, a constructivist approach would argue for two reasons. The first is the unequal access that women have had to opportunities to become technological innovators and users (McDaniel, Cummins and Sender Beauchamp 1988). Judy Wajcman (1991) argues that during the early phases of industrialization women were not only denied access to education and ownership of

capital, but due to new patterns of gender, were physically separated from technology. As the factory and home were separated, women no longer interacted with the machines of production (Wajcman 1991: 21). The separation of the means of production from the home led to the deepening division of society into public spheres of work that were the domain of men and private spheres of domesticity where women reigned. The gendered division of the public and private spheres has in turn become crucial to the ways in which technology is used and understood.

The second, and related reason, is the very nature of what counts as technology and technical knowledge. Researchers "have shown that the technical has been defined in such a way as to exclude both those technologies which women invented and those which are primarily used by women. The link between masculinity and technology is thus an ideological link" (Gill and Grint 1995: 3; see also Wajcman 1991). Tools of the private sphere are not given the status of technology. Stanley (1995), for example, cites the invention of the baby bottle nipple. This tool, created by women to assist women, was in circulation long before being granted a patent. Thus, it was not formally recognized as an invention. For what is defined as technical knowledge is that which is associated with men. The use of the telephone by a receptionist is not categorized as technical knowledge, but work on a construction site is. Thus, the difference in the gender of the user and whether the object is part of the public or private sphere are crucial to our understanding of the technological object. Together the location of technology and the definition of what is technical are critical aspects of how 'technology' becomes masculinized. Hence, technology's masculinity does not happen in a vacuum, but is the outcome of culture.

A constructivist approach can also be applied to gender. In this formulation, gender is understood as discursively constructed through the power relations of a

particular historical moment. Gender, therefore, is not an innate determining factor that separates all men from all women; rather what it means to be male or female is framed as variable across time and culture. These meanings are in turn tied to technology through relations of power, such that the activities that are performed by males (use and development of technology), are the activities that are defined as "important". These relations of power, although constructed, are nevertheless very real in their impacts.

As Wajcman (1991) writes, these constructions of technology's use and users must be remembered not only as gendered, but as defined through multiple hierarchical relations:

> In our culture, to be in command of the latest technology signifies being involved in directing the future and so it is a highly valued and mythologized activity. The mastery of other kinds of technology, such as that often found amongst working-class lads who are adept with cars, does not convey the same status or agency. Neither in fact does hegemonic masculinity, which is more strongly possessed by working-class than ruling-class men. ... The point here is that although technical expertise is a key source of power amongst men, it does not override other sources of power, such as position in the class structure. (145)

Technology, rather than being seen as a set of objects or artifacts as was the case in liberal feminism, is conceptualized as embodying a culture's beliefs and practices. This embodiment is not fixed and determined as it was in ecofeminism, but is seen as a reflection of the society's power relations. The different meanings and expectations of technology that men have versus women, that the working class has versus the wealthy, etc. are reflections of relations of power that originate in the beliefs and practices of a society. "The correspondence between men and machines is thus neither essential nor immutable, and therefore the potential exists for its transformation" (Wajcman 1991:159).

Double Life of the Telephone

By framing technology as discursively constructed the meanings and uses that are given to a technology can be understood as a product of the intersection of various discourses. The designers and marketers may envision a particular role for the technology, but this is not determined, indeed it may be very different from the use actually adapted. The telephone is a primary example of how a technology has come to be used in ways that subvert the initial intentions of its producers. It is a technology which women, to some extent, have appropriated for their own use within a culture that defines technology as masculine. This does not, however, suggest that the general masculinity of technology is challenged, for the appropriation is one which works within traditional gender expectations.

The invention of the telephone in 1876 by Alexander Graham Bell signified a major transformation in the understanding of communication (Levinson 1998:59). Early predictions of the telephone's future were glowing, for example *Scientific American* in 1880 wrote:

> Nothing less than a new organization of society - a state of things in which every individual, however secluded, will have at call every other individual in the community, to the saving of no end of social and business complications, of needless going to and fro, of disappointments, delays, and a countless host of those great and little evils and annoyances which go so far under present conditions to make life laborious and unsatisfactory. (cited in Marvin 1988: 65)

These utopian idealizations are not particular to the phone, but rather are similar to the proclamations made of many new technologies.[1] This view of technology as a social

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[1] One thing that is notable about the phone has been the endurance of the technology's utopic 'effects' in academic writing. Nearly 100 years after the above was written, Marshall McLuhan (1964) argued that the telephone is a "fully participatory technology" that by-passes hierarchical arrangements: "In an electric structure there are, so far as the time and space of this planet are concerned, no margins. There can, therefore, be dialogue only among centers and among equals. The chain-of-command pyramids cannot obtain support from electric technology" (cited in Rakow 1988:61).

equalizer, however, is highly problematic for it focuses on technology as an independent factor that determines society. Similar to liberal feminism, this perspective overlooks the impacts of the society, particularly its power hierarchies, on the meanings of the object.

Following this concern with the relationship between power and technology it should be recognized that the telephone, despite its apparent ubiquity, has been a technology of the wealthy. [2] Any avenues for the chain-of-command to be overrun that the phone presented were quickly controlled: secretaries and receptionists directed and controlled calls; listings of phone numbers were kept private; books of etiquette were developed for 'proper' phone behavior; the wealthy pressed for private lines while the lower classes were left on party lines (Martin 1991 & 1998; Marvin 1988). What it did enable was individuals to communicate more easily with others of the same social group. Thus, there is little to suggest that the telephone in any way erased social stratifications (Marvin 1988: 70).

Two central factors led to the feminization of the phone: the role of women as operators and their location within the private sphere of the home. During the late nineteenth century, telephone companies were among the largest employers of women - an action not taken to advance women's equality, but for economic practicality. Unlike the first operators who had been teenage boys[3], women were responsible workers who accepted low wages. These operators were taught to have a "pleasing and helpful voice while being businesslike and efficient, combining values of both the private and public sphere" (Rakow 1988:77). The valuing of women's polite and efficient use of the phone continues to the present day in female defined jobs, such as receptionist and secretary.

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[2] This can be seen for example in the difference in penetration rates of the telephone for differing demographic groups. In South Africa in 1986, for example, there were 102.5 telephone lines for every 100 White households, versus 38.5 lines for urban Black households and 13.8 lines for rural Black households (Mansell 1996: 38).

[3] Bell's chief engineer at the time described these boys as 'Wild Indians' for their rude and unruly behavior (Sterling 1995: 39).

Through these occupations, like that of the operator, women are moved out of the domestic sphere and into the sphere of work and men. Their interaction here is with a technology, the telephone - a masculine invention - in the sphere that belongs to men. Thus, the explanation that technology is masculine because of its location in the public sphere can no longer be said to hold. But, to accept this would be to overlook the values associated with the roles women take on - support and help - values very similar to those of the domestic world. What this draws attention to, therefore, is that it is not the physical location of the technology which is crucial. Rather it is the gendered definition of the values expected of those who perform the duty, and the socially defined importance of these duties due to the user's relative power, that leads to the definition of the technology as 'feminine'. For while women may be in the public sphere with technology today, they are still disproportionately performing activities of help and assistance, as they do in the domestic sphere.

The second, and in many ways more important aspect of the feminization of the telephone, was its location within the private sphere of the home. The nineteenth century men who developed the industry envisioned the telephone as a business-to-business service. The move of the phone into the home was in order to expand its business functions, such as the ordering of goods, making appointments and protection (Martin 1998:56). It was sold, to men, for the convenience it would allow them in their household: "Your wife may order you dinner, a hack, your family physician, etc. all by telephone without leaving the house or trusting servants or messengers to do it" read an 1878 advertisement (cited in Rakow 1986:79).

Recreational uses of the phone were slowly introduced as women began to use the phone to maintain family connections and avoid the isolation of the home. In the early 1920s Mary Sherman, president of the General Federation of Women's Clubs,

stated to this effect: "Before toilets are installed or washbasins put into homes, automobiles are purchased and telephones are connected ... because the housewife for generations has sought to escape from the monotony rather than the drudgery of her lot" (cited in Fischer 1988: 216). As Martin (1998) points out, the telephone was often the only way for women to hear each other's voices without having to leave their homes (62).

These uses, through their focus on communication for pleasure, were not the "*rational* activities [the] 'appropriate' uses governed by an ensemble of rules and procedures" (Martin 1998: 55) for which the phone had been intended. The technology, therefore, cannot be seen as a static, nor a determined object. Despite how it was 'meant' to be used women took it up in new and resistive ways. Thus to say technology is inherently patriarchal would be to discount these uses. Similarly to say that the phone is a neutral, independent artifact, as liberal feminism does, would be to ignore the impact of the social definition on how it was used. The uses women made of the phone can be seen to highlight two important ideas: that technology, here the phone, is constructed within society, and that people have choices and agency in how to use technologies. The artifact, therefore, may be given a meaning in production, but this meaning is liable to change as it is introduced to society and again as the values and ideals of society shift. The uses women have made (and are making) of the phone, however, must not be seen purely as free choice for although they may be resistant to the expected definition, they fall firmly in line with the duties women are traditionally expected to uphold.

Lana Rakow's (1986) ethnographic analysis of female residents of a Midwest town called "Prospect" reflects this expectation that phone users would be predominantly female because of women's duties. She states that use of the phone for

visiting was more frequent over time as costs decreased, families were separated over greater distances, and private lines replaced party lines. These calls were also more often women's calls than men's (230). The popularity of the phone with women today, Rakow argues, is in large part because social use of the phone is compatible with dominant gender ideology. She states that:

> Use of the telephone is consonant with an ideology of gender that approves of women's domestic and nurturing responsibilities while claiming those activities are simple reflections of women's natural inclinations. By carrying out their expected responsibilities and by dealing creatively with their social place through the telephone, women seem to probe the correctness of the social definition of being a woman. (1993: 146)

This conceptualization of the social use of the phone as acceptable for women because of their expected gender duties also, in part, explains the acceptability of girls' use of the phone. It is during the teenage years that girls learn of their future roles as caretakers and that communication and caring are crucial to being 'feminine'. At the same time they are at a stage of life where they are still under their parents' control and protection from the outside world. Like their mothers, but unlike their male peers, they are often restricted to the home, both by domestic duties and by the threats of the public world (Cohen 1997; McRobbie 1991). Therefore, the phone is taken up in a manner similar to that of their mothers - it is a tool to move beyond the home's isolation and maintain social and nurturing relationships. Girls, however, pursue the telephone to slightly different ends, namely for "friendships, dating, and the crucial function of cultural transmission ('Did you hear?')" (Rich 1996: 223). Like their mothers' use of the telephone, the uses that girls make of the telephone can be seen as resistive. A crucial difference, however, is that the girls' resistance is not only to the ideals of the telephone companies (which were altered early on through the recognition of women's use as profitable), but to parental control. What the girls' use of the phone can be seen to

create is the potential, albeit limited, for independence. This use of the phone for both independence and for social support can be seen as the outcome of their intersecting, yet conflictual, social location as both youth and female.

At the current time, the idea that girls spend (waste) a great amount of time on the phone has become very common. This idea is not only a staple of the mass media, but has found support in statistical accounts. Brandon and Brandon (1981) ran a multiple regression analysis on data from the Chicago area in the 1970s and reported:

> Multiple regression analysis indicates that local usage is strongly related to the number of persons in a household, when all other things are equal, and that it makes a difference what the ages and sexes of the household member are. The group with the largest effect is *young teenage girls*. Further, total message units is particularly high where there are *teenagers of either sex*. (italics added: 5)

This report again supports the stereotype that girls talk a great deal, but it introduces a new and unexplored idea: that this talk is common to "teenagers of either sex". If this statistic is accepted as suggesting that both girls and boys are frequent users one is forced to ask, why it is that the telephone is not stereotyped as something that boys 'waste their time on'? In the following I would like to suggest that this is because the telephone is constructed as a tool of femininity - it is a technology that has a gendered connotation which renders it unacceptable for males to enjoy. This lack of acceptability does not mean that boys do not use the object, but that their use is defined in a different manner than that of girls.

Seventeen and the Gendering of the Phone

In January 1960 an article was featured in *Seventeen* entitled "They have a Private Telephone Company so that they can Talk Talk Talk Talk Talk" (Image 1). The story asked:

> Would you pay fifty cents a month to have your *own* phone in your own room? That's what Sue West and twenty-seven other teen-agers in Berkeley, California pay for the right to chat with their friends (free from the range of parents) for all hours. All are members of the Western Communication company, the only teen-owned-and-operated telephone company in America. The company was born when John Davies, 18, and Preston Thomson, 19, decided to "do something about the telephone problem" and to indulge their passions for electronic tinkering. (italics in original; Seventeen, January 1960: 47)

The text is accompanied by three images: a male checking the phone wires; two males repairing cables; a female smiling and holding a phone. The differentiation between the ideals of gender behavior is clear in the juxtaposition of these images - it is males who produce and females who consume. It is males who 'make' the technology for females to 'use'. It is the boys who 'tinker' and the girls who "talk talk talk talk talk".

Many sociologists and psychologists have argued that the teenage years are fundamental in the development of identity. A crucial aspect of identity is gender. It is during these years that the differences between being male or female, masculine or feminine, increase in importance, and more directly impact behavior. Peirce (1990), in an article on the socialization of teenage girls through teen magazines, argues that learning to be masculine or feminine:

> Includes being good at athletics as well as math for boys and being pretty and popular for girls. In fact, the American emphasis on female beauty becomes central to a teenage girl's life; it is the pretty girl and not the bright girl who is the most popular (Romer 1981: 50). Boys' achievement is motivated by the desire for mastery and other intrinsic rewards, while girls' achievement is directed toward winning social approval and other extrinsic rewards. (495)

Ideas of what is masculine and feminine behavior arise from a variety of sources - schools, peers, parents, media. It is the latter of these, media, which will be focused upon here. Through this focus, how the telephone is imaged being used by males and females in advertisements, will be employed to critique how ideals of femininity and masculinity are constructed in relation to technology.

There are two aspects of the article on the teen telephone company that require attention. The first is its placement in *Seventeen*, a magazine for teenage girls. The second is the timing of the image - 1960. At this time use of the telephone was less frequent than today, due largely to cost. The ads at this time are, therefore, trying to increase phone use while ensuring the reproduction of the masculine culture of technology.

In 1960, Bell Telephones ran a series of advertisements in *Seventeen* that relate this 'teaching' function of advertising. Throughout the ads, the central theme is being a good daughter and a popular friend. An example of this is an ad that shows two girls at a phone booth (Image 2). The main text reads: "Mother... need anything downtown?" and continues "Maybe Mother doesn't need a thing - but she must be proud of the daughter who's thoughtful enough to call and ask her." In the image the caller stands with her back to her friend, her attention focused on the family. Both she and her friend look down, avoiding the gaze of the camera. The caller's shy appearance is compounded by the placement of both her hands upon the telephone receiver, clutching it as a child does a security blanket. The phone is her link to home, her umbilical cord to mother. The ad concludes, "Your family will appreciate it. And you'll feel better for having called." The reader, who in viewing the image is called into its narrative, learns that by placing her domestic duties as Mother's helper at the forefront, she will receive praise.

During the 1960s, the phone was frequently imaged within advertisements, both as the product being directly marketed and as a prop. One image for Ban-Lon[4], for example, shows three disembodied female figures standing in telephone booths (Image 3). These women have been reduced to curvy sweaters and delicate gloves: they are

[4] This was a fabric popular during the 1960s.

human beings that have literally become figures/forms. The values that are crucial to constructions of femininity - beautiful body, delicate touch, giving, communication - have been taken over by objects that symbolize them - buxom sweater, white gloves, wrapped gifts, a telephone receiver. A frowning male stands, watching the three female figures. The male retains a whole form, both body and attire being imaged. The text below reads "There's nothing better in a sweater than you and Ban-Lon". Through this direct address to the reader, "you" are called into the image. These objects work as a metonymy for the perfect woman. As "you" are called into this space, you imagine yourself becoming this perfect image of femininity. Yet, in doing so you must reduce yourself to only the symbols of perfected femininity. All individualism, all uniqueness has been erased. Thus to be this beautiful, desirable figure means that all difference must become invisible. The image also works by presenting three forms of "wrapping" each hiding something that completes: first the presents; second the sweater, complete only with you; and third the telephone complete only with someone (him?) on the other end. All three are things which the male desires but is frustrated by his lack of access to, despite his power over the image, as shown by his full form and direct gaze.

Given that these ads all come from the 1960s, their conservative and traditional outlook is not particularly surprising. These images of the early 1960s reflect the post-war affluence of the middle-class in America. [5] For teens it was a time when entertaining was centered around the suburban home, which offered more privacy and freedom than before: "The ranch-style house, spread behind a landscaped lawn, offered plenty of space for entertaining friends: a recreation room, a den, a finished basement - places where teens could turn the radio or record player up loud. Teens' own rooms

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[5] The trends in teen culture that will be discussed will generally be those which occurred in the United States because of both it dominance over ideas of youth culture and because this is the origin of the advertising images.

became even more off-limits to adults and siblings" (Rollin 1999: 207). It was also a time, before the second-wave of the women's movement, when the division of gender roles was firmly entrenched in the idealized nuclear family. For girls it was this ideal of being mother and homemaker, to which they aspired. Thus, learning domestic skills that would attract and 'keep' a man were of central importance.

Conflict over the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights movement acted as a catalyst for the rapid and radical changes of the late 1960s and 1970s. At the center of this change were the youth, the huge generation of the baby-boom for whom the economic climate was very favorable. By the early 1970s, the feminist movement was in full-swing. In the United States this can be seen in the increasing frequency with which women entered state legislatures and the strong start of the federal Equal Rights Amendment (Rollin 1999: 244). The images of the 1960s, which worked by promoting politeness and being a 'good girl', were no longer acceptable to youth. Thus the traditional images of teenzines, like *Seventeen*, had to change in order to keep young girls reading. The magazines attempted to give the readers what they wanted through the inclusion, in a safe, watered-down way, of politics, and images of protest and the "hippy" culture (although often as fashion and decorating motifs). Peirce's (1990) content analysis of teen magazine in 1961, 1972, 1985, seconds this:

> The feminist movement of the late 1960s may have influenced editorial content somewhat: the amount of coverage in the category "male-female relation", representing traditional socialization decreased in 1972, while coverage in the category "self-development", representing more feminist messages, increased. In 1985, however, the percentages returned to their 1961 figures, suggesting that the effect was not permanent (491).

Advertisements, like magazine content, are a key method for reading the ideals of behavior at a particular historical moment. As Leiss et al. (1990) state, "in a consumer society, advertisements are an important means for transmitting, in specific

forms that are consistent with product messages, cues about new styles of personal behavior" (66). The focus on feminism that occurred in the 1970s led to the questioning of gender roles, particularly the division between public and private spheres. An outcome of this questioning in teen magazines was that the majority of the features and advertisements focused on girls doing activities, often outside the home. The phone, a technology of the home, in turn became invisible.

Teens of the 1980s, in contrast, wanted a return to "the American Dream: 'fulfillment in marriage, children, a good job, and material comfort'" (Rollin 1999:273). This return to traditional ideals can be seen in the popularity of television shows such as *Happy Days*. This series set in the 1950s showed a simpler time when students worried about dating and cars, rather than politics and revolution (Rollin 1999: 274). The advertising images reflect this desire to return to traditional gender relations as girls are relocated back into the home, a trend that is reflected in the increase of images presented in *Seventeen* during the 1980s of girls on the phone.

This cycle of the phone's appearance and disappearance in ads closely mirrors Peirce's (1990) observations of the short lived move of teen magazines to more feminist content. The correspondence between the appearance of the two in teen magazines (phones and feminism) affirms that the phone is associated with traditional gender roles. What was emphasized about using the phone, however, shifted from being a 'good' daughter in the 1960s, to being fun and independent in the 1980s. This new emphasis was a reflection of the impact of feminism, which was appropriated by marketers. In advertising, the symbols of feminism were used to suggest an 'equality' where it was the responsibility of the individual to create/purchase their own opportunities. This is not the social radicalism which was proposed during the early 1970s, but a watered down and commodified feminism (Goldman, 1992).

In advertising, feminism became a set of empty signifiers that suggested equality as a commodity to be purchased. This is reflected in an ad for Maidenform underwear (Image 4) which images a man and a woman on a trading room floor. The woman is at the front, her gaze to a paper trail of numbers held in one hand, a phone held away from her in the other. Her dress is open, revealing her in only scanty underwear. The man stands behind her, also on a phone, gazing in her direction, but somehow unaware of her state of dress. The ad represents the appropriation of feminist goals that Robert Goldman (1992) termed "commodity feminism": it is selling the signifiers of feminism - independence, equality - in a manner that precludes their possibility. The ad's text reads: "The Maidenform woman. You never know where she'll turn up. Here she's trading for some hot commodities: lacy, sexy Sweet Nothings." This is a location where the phone is not feminized for in business it is still a tool of men, a tool of power. As she holds the phone away from herself, she is distanced from the possibility of using it in a productive way. Despite having the same tools as the man, she is hopelessly out of place and is repositioned by her dress as a sex symbol; she is turned into a "sweet nothing".

A second image from the 1980s, an ad for Dole products (Image 5), is organized around an African-American girl[6] sitting at the bottom of a flight of stairs, phone in one hand, mirror in the other. The main text asks: "As your body changes, shouldn't your diet change, too?" A recipe that will prove that "foods can do wonders for the way you look - and for the way you feel" follows this. The image calls out to "you", the teenage girl whose physical and emotional being is in a state of transition; the girl who is constantly looking at herself in the mirror to check her appearance and talking on the

[6] This is one of the very few occasions when a person of color appears in an ad with the phone - largely a reflection of the magazine as a whole.

phone. The centrality of these two concerns is highlighted by their parallel positioning, as each take up a hand.

This image highlights the return of the girl to the home. Whether girls ever moved out of the domestic realm is another issue, but it was, at least for a short time, the ideal. Here the ideal has returned to something very similar to the 1960s, except that the messages have become more veiled. No longer do you phone home or do things to help the family - you do them to improve yourself. The other-oriented femininity of earlier times has changed to a focus upon one's image. The ideals of feminism are incorporated - but only to the extent that one is no longer so selfless. Although the maintenance of femininity is still necessary, it has become a commodity to be purchased, rather than a set of behaviors to fulfill.

Today, a paradoxical mix of "equal" opportunity and traditional idealizations of gender, are promoted in advertisements for the telephone, which reflects society. The current era, which emphasizes technology and individualism, is a time when women have moved into positions of greater political power (Rollin 1999: 311), yet they are simultaneously framed as vulnerable and sexualized (Monica Lewinski and Anita Hill serve as two strong examples in the U.S. context). At the same time as emphasis has been placed on creating equality in schools and promoting a variety of career opportunities to girls, research on the 'plight of teen girls' has become popular reading. For example Peggy Orenstein's (1994) *School Girls*, argues that girls are being taught, often unconsciously, by parents and teachers to be quiet and polite, while boys are allowed to be, and even rewarded for being, aggressive and noisy. These paradoxical ideals are also being taught within the advertising images of teenzines.

One of the images that reflects this paradox between tradition and change is a Steve Madden ad (Image 6) in which a computer generated image of a girl is shown in a

bedroom holding the receiver of a pink, rotary, "princess" phone. Around her are stuffed animals, pretty china figures, a pink cupcake. The girl is dressed in frilly panties and bra, slippers, hair in curlers, with her eyes and mouth opened wide in a gasp of "He said what?" The image is devoid of text, save the store's name and a list of products. This image, like that for Dole products, is located in the domestic sphere where the girl is physically isolated from her friends. Through these symbols the image returns to the values and simplicity of the past yet shows the backwardness of this move by juxtaposing it to computer imagery. In part the overt references to the past - the rotary phone, the idealized pink and pretty room - show a desire to return to the past, but this is problematized by the model's computer generated form. The old phone in comparison to her computer-altered figure suggests the phone is no longer a technology through which proper femininity is taught as it was in the 1960s, nor is it a tool of masculine culture to be appropriated - it is a technology of the past. The telephone becomes a symbolic throwback to a simpler, gentler time. Its obsolescence standing in stark contrast to her manipulated form. This is not to suggest that the phone is no longer gendered. Indeed as this image suggests the phone is still crucial to the sharing of information in a girls' world, but as a technology it is second-rate. It might be cute, but it does not match up to the fast new technologies, the technologies of masculine culture, such as the computer that created her.

Gendering the Cellular Phone

In moving to the cellular phone, we are moving to a much more recent innovation in technology. The cellular phone, developed by the military and later adapted for personal use, exists as part of the new information and communication technologies that

are understood to be revolutionizing our world. These technologies, like the telephone in its early years, are frequently described in a utopian manner:

> For governments and big companies, the telecoms revolution will be unsettling, because it will put more power into the homes and on to the desks of ordinary people. Voters and customers alike will find it easier to make comparisons, acquire information, by-pass gatekeepers, cross borders. (*The Economist*, September 30, 1996: 16)

The lived experiences of these technologies, however, is one differentiated by class, by race and by gender.

When the cellular phone was introduced for public consumption, it was framed as an instrument of business, paralleling the phone's introduction (Rakow & Navarro 1993: 148). Between the late nineteenth Century and the late twentieth Century, when these two introductions occurred, the business world underwent fundamental changes in terms of gender. Today women are part of the business world in much higher proportions than they were in the late nineteenth century when the telephone was first being used.[7] Despite this, women's participation is not yet at anywhere near an equal level, particularly when the office hierarchy is taken into account where males still hold the majority of power positions. It can, therefore, be expected that in the early years of the cellular phone the majority of users were male because it would have been their work which was deemed important enough to justify the cost of this new technology.

Robert Tannenbaum (1991) conducted a survey of 3160 cellular subscribers to discover their reasons for using the technology and to question if it had any impact on work/family demands. The survey was purposively sampled to have an equal number of male and female respondents, 93% of whom had the technology for business related

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[7] The telephone can indeed be credited in part for the movement of women into the public sphere as they moved from being operators to secretaries and receptionists managing phone calls within the office environment.

reasons (57). At the time subscribers to Cantel, who provided the data, were 92% male and 8% female (24). Based upon the responses received, Tannenbaum reported that men were more likely to have the phone for business and women more likely to have one for personal reasons (58). The women's motivations for having the technology were much more frequently related to family - particularly to balancing work and family demands: "women seem more likely than men to need the flexibility offered by cellular telephones to manage their simultaneous work and family demands" (72).

Ads for the cellular phone directed towards women frequently rely upon the ideal of success, presenting a liberal feminist conceptualization of individual agency. Purchasing a cellular phone, the images suggest, is a way in which women can become equal because it will enable them to do everything at once. In turn, the cellular phone becomes a symbol of success. This can be seen in two advertisements, the first for Chartered Accountants (Image 7) and the second for Citizen watches (Image 8). In these two images, the cellular phone symbolizes success by suggesting that the user leads a fast-paced and demanding life, which is the corporate ideal. But who/what is making demands of the woman (work, partner, children) is ignored in the images. Through the cellular phone the boundary between private and public spheres is irreparably altered. The images make this overlap and its creation of a "parallel shift" (where at work you are in contact with family and at home with corporate clients) invisible, focusing only on ideals of feminism (success, wealth, importance) removed from the lived experiences of women.

The patterns of use of the cellular phone that women report, unlike the idealized world of advertising, clearly reflect their gendered duties and concerns. This can be seen in Lana Rakow and Vija Navarro's (1993) exploration of the perceived need for women to have a cellular phone. Through a set of in-depth qualitative interviews with

women who had cellular telephones they found that, in the majority of cases, the phone had been purchased by the interviewee's husband for 'safety and security' (151). The women were also concerned with security, but more important for them was the desire to be available to their children (153). Rakow and Navarro argue that these differing motivations for purchase point to a very traditional set of gender relations being enacted through the technology, wherein males are able to fulfill their protective role and women are supported in their care-taking role.

Market research firms have also reported similar findings. *Wireless Week* (July 1997), in response to why women feel the need for a cellular phone, reported that " 40 percent of the respondents said they would feel safer if they owned a cellular phone, especially when traveling to remote locations. Twenty percent said having a cellular phone would help them better manage career and family" (Albright 1997:1). This research conducted by marketers to find methods to sell again highlights two motives for women's consumption that are deeply gendered: fear and security, and management of family and work.

The marketing of the cellular phone to the general population frames the technology in a very traditional manner. While its use is promoted to both male and female audiences, unlike the telephone in its early years, the types of uses that are promoted to each group reflect the idea of technology as masculine culture. To be a man is to be in charge of technology and be in power. To be a woman is to be a user of technology - one who is more dominated than dominating. Surprisingly, however, those factors that were found to be important by marketing firms to women's purchase - fear and parallel duties - are not images used. I would argue that while these gendered uses may be the reasons women actually do consume, they are not idealizations that women wish to "become"; they are lived experience not fantasy. In the world of advertising men

are macho and women are delicate. In presenting these fantasy images the advertisers reinforce and naturalize what the reader has unconsciously been taught. If we have accepted that it is men who conquer and women who cower it is 'natural' to believe that men will protect and women need to be protected. Thus, that which is the conscious motivation to buy is an outward manifestation of the unconsciously accepted gender ideals that have been made to seem 'natural' through their repeated presentation.

To explore this I will contrast two images: the first for Ericsson phones (Image 9), the second for Motorola (Image 10). The first image presents a map of an urban area projected onto the very white face of a man. The text reads "You are everywhere. Now there's a phone that works everywhere too." This image presents man as space - no longer just colonizer he becomes omnipresent, everywhere at once. He is the image of power - young, attractive, white, well-groomed. He is the ideal of business and of success, gazing straight into the camera, ready to challenge. It is this which the reader is invited to be through the phrase "*you* are everywhere".

In contrast to the Ericsson ad, the Motorola image works through desire. Here an attractive woman lies with a cellular phone in front of her. Her gaze is again towards the camera, but its strength is diminished by her coy smile and the hand holding her face up. Lying face down she is in a position of submission becoming, like the cellular phone, an object to desire. The text here reads "I found it under my credit card." The person addressed is no longer "you" rather it is the model speaking of herself. For the male viewer the female model is like the phone: something small and delicate; something that you can control and take with you. For the female reader the model is someone to become: someone desirable, someone delicate who will be protected. Her 'loss' of the phone, for the male audience, asserts the inferiority of her femininity: how intelligent and technologically literate can one be if they are able to lose their cell phone

under a credit card? For the female viewer it is a reminder that, in line with the masculine culture of technology, they are consumers, not producers. What they want is to be desired, which is only possible if one is not too intelligent, nor too technologically adapt. If one were to renounce their feminine role as consumer to take on the power of producer and full user, they would become a threat to this masculine culture.

In advertising the people shown are, Erving Goffman (1979) argues, not particular people, but representatives of categories of people. The way that we look at an ad is similar to the way we look at a stranger on the street: we view and categorize them. The understanding we have of the image/person is certainly meaningful, but it is truncated and abstract (23). Our ease in interpreting the images lies in "those institutionalized arrangements in social life which allow strangers to glimpse the lives of the persons they pass, and to the readiness of all of us to switch at any moment from dealing with the real world to participating in make believe ones" (23). While the photos used in ads do not necessarily prove anything about gender, they do force us to notice what are accepted gender behaviors. In order to illustrate how imaged behaviors are gendered, he suggests imagining the model(s) sex switched (25). Can we imagine a powerful woman staring directly into the camera, map projected onto her face, proclaiming that you can be everywhere? Or a male lying on his stomach smiling coyly admitting to losing his cell phone under his credit card? These images are, to differing extents, jarring. They seem strange and in this strangeness, our attention is drawn to the stereotypes upon which they rely. Gender, however, is not the only characteristic relied upon in this truncated view of the social world that ads present. In creating an easily digested image, stereotypes of age, race, and class, are also common. It is age that I will address here, particularly the intersection of femininity and youth.

Teenage girls are a group that is often presented by mainstream culture as non-productive and self-obsessed. Their activities, which are believed to focus on friends and shopping, are deemed trivial. This can be seen reflected in the advertisements directed to adults that use teenage girls, such that the girls' use of the cellular phone stands in stark contrast to that imaged for adults, both male and female. For example, an ad for Compaq computers[8] (Image 11) shows a downtown city scene filled with a variety of individuals all on cellular phones. A business woman steps from a car talking; a man rushes by talking and gesturing; a pizza delivery man walks carrying his goods and phone. In the center of the frame is a teen girl, leaned back against a fire-hydrant talking into a cell phone. She is the only person in a state of relaxation, her nonconformity further accentuated by her funky style of dress in a sea of business attire. The text reads "Blah, Blah, Yak, Yak, Yada, Yada, Yada Compaq keeps the World's Top 35 Telcos Talking." Everyone imaged here is indeed talking, but the girl stands out. She, unlike the others, is not moving, she is not 'doing' anything but talking. Her placement at the front and center of the ad draws the reader's eye directly from the text to her - it is she that talks on and on and on.

This characterization of girls' use of the cellular phone as 'other' is presented again in an ad for STMicroelectronics[9] (Image 12). Here three girls huddle around a cellular phone, giggling at what is being said. The text reads "Talk with more Intelligence ... Whether it's finding out who Billy *really* likes, checking e-mail on the run or conducting a teleconference from the car, mobile phones are an essential part of our lives". Presumably, it is the first of these listed that the girls' are using the telephone for. If we again take up Goffman's strategy of reversal and imagine a group of older men

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[8] This advertisement was found on the back cover of *Life* magazine.

[9] This image was found in both *Forbes* and *The Economist.*

gathered around the phone in similar poses the stereotypes become clear. There is something about the girls' behavior that is less intelligent and less important. Yet this behavior is not in any way surprising or shocking, rather it is what the reader, an adult, expects of teen girls - it is what is 'natural'.

Contesting the "Essential" Reading of Images

In reading the above images I have attempted to relate the way idealized gendered use of the phone and cellular phone are presented in advertising. Central to this is the impact that the socio-historical context has had upon ideas of proper masculinity and femininity, both of which are constructed making them potentially shifting and fluid. Despite this possibility for change, the imaged expectations of being a teenage girl user of technology have remained remarkably stable - at least as they are idealized in advertising. The gendered meanings of the telephone and cellular phone constructed through advertising are constructions that point to technology as masculine culture, as Wajcman (1991) suggests. Unlike a liberal feminist account where technology is neutral, these images can be seen to relate meanings that are naturalized through their re-presentation. They are images that fall in line with traditional patriarchal divisions, but they are not, as ecofeminism suggests, static. They can, and do, change over time as the society surrounding them shifts.

This constructivist understanding of technology, however, is not without criticism. Rosalind Gill and Keith Grint (1995), for example, argue that there are four interrelated problems with the perspective that must be addressed: ideology, patriarchy, essentialism, and functionalism. The first, the critique of ideology, works from "the argument that technologies are not neutral but gendered, and that the masculinity of technologies will not be changed merely by the inclusion of more women in the design

process" (12). A problem arises when we try to understand whether technology's masculinity is an effect of the ideology of masculinity, which affects both men and women, or if it is the outcome of men designing self-serving products. Further, they state "even if we take at face value the claim that it is the ideology of masculinity which has the connection with technology, a problem still remains: the nature of the relationship between the ideology of masculinity and actual human subjects is not addressed" (14). The problem with their critique, though, is their focus upon the process of design as that which gives technology its gendered nature. If one reframes technology as a part of culture that gains meaning from a variety of contexts, the conceptualization that technology may be masculine can be separated from the actions of individual men and women. Importantly what the critique points to is the potential for an understanding of technology as masculine culture to take on an overly structural formulation.

It is this structuralism that also motivates a second critique, the reliance of an understanding of technology as discursively constructed on ideas of 'Patriarchy'. The problem here is that patriarchy refers to a concept of transhistorical male dominance that overshadows all other forms of oppression, such as those motivated by class and race. How useful this concept is in a framework that attempts to be historically and culturally grounded comes into question (15). Here I concede to their concern, but question whether this is suggested by a focus on technology as masculine. In focusing upon gender relations the work does attempt the nearly impossible task of differentiating between the effects of different categorizations - a task that can never be complete. But at the same time gender relations have had very real effects upon the lived experiences of women. To conclude that because structures intersect one cannot critique any of them is to move to an extremely subjectivist perspective where one can never move

beyond individual experience. It is to throw out the baby of society with the bathwater of structuralism.

Their third critique is again an argument against structure - here the threat of "the essentialist drift" (11). Gill and Grint argue that, in framing technology as masculine culture, the essentialism of ecofeminism comes through because of an implicit assumption that men have different values that are not compatible with those of women. This leads to their fourth critique: that the distinction between "masculinity" and "femininity" is left unquestioned. In working with the way people "do gender" through technology the question of what is a male use and what is a female use, they argue, are established prior to observations taking place. The result being:

> That only people who have been identified independently in advance as men or women can be seen as doing masculinity or femininity respectively. Moreover, only those practices which reinforce or reproduce existing patterns of gender relations are 'noticed' analytically. Gender relations, then, are always seen to be reproduced. There is no space for challenge or change... (17)

What the theory overlooks, they argue, is the fluid nature of gender discourses and the complexity that exists within them.

The critiques of Gill and Grint importantly point to problems in understanding gendered meanings of technology as masculine culture - namely the lack of space for agency or recognition of behavior that deviates from the ideal. In large part, this stems from the fact that their perspective is much more subjective than that of Wajcman (1991) and Van Zoonen (1992). Yet, the work of Van Zoonen (1991), although structural, creates a recognition of how technologies become meaningful through multiple discourses, of which media is one and use another. In taking up Van Zoonen's ideas, and trying to avoid an overly structural and ideologically influenced perspective on the meanings that the telephone and cellular phone have for teenage girls, I have turned to a few of these girls. These girls, although in no way "representative" of all teenagers,

are at the same time "typical".[10] Through their descriptions of their uses and their expectations of others uses of the technologies, I will attempt to address the issue of variability within the group "female" and draw attention to the tensions between monolithic ideas of technology as masculine/feminine and their constructions in everyday life.[11]

Boys versus "Phone People"

The history of the telephone has shown its movement from being solely a tool for business to being 'appropriated' by women for the maintenance of family relations and interpersonal communication. As female users adapted it to their needs so, in turn, did teenage girls. Today girls' use of the phone has become expected, almost natural. It is certainly not something that, as the images of the 1960s suggest, needs to be learned or promoted with the promise of praise. Rather it is something they choose to do. For example, all of the girls interviewed used the phone on a daily basis ranging from half an hour to five hours a day. Using the phone to talk with friends, particularly on school nights was central to many of the girls' lives. This was particularly true for fifteen-year-old Victoria:

> I'm on the phone a lot - a lot! [laughs] My whole life like revolves around the phone ...
>
> *How much is a lot?*
>
> A lot. Every single day, I'm on it all the time, all the time. ... Schooldays, like five hours probably. And then on weekends, it all depends, cause if I'm getting together with everyone then I usually don't get on the phone, right? But its probably about the same, cause its all mixed up, I'm always doing something else, so probably about six hours.

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[10] A notable shortcoming, however, is that most of the girls are middle class, and the majority of a European background.

[11] One of Gill and Grint's most fundamental critiques, that of an emphasis upon patriarchy rather than other forms of oppression, will not be directly addressed due to the focus upon gender and age here. This does not mean they do not have impacts, nor that they are unimportant, but due to the scope of this project it is not possible to fully explicate all of these differential factors.

Later in the interview when asked what was talked about on the phone, she responded with a description of talk that fit closely with the expectation of women's use as emotional, caretaking work.

> Anything and everything. I don't know - like situations, stories, always telling stories, everyone's telling stories. Like I have different things in common with different people, like Sheila and I talk about work, or people if they have problems they can call me and tell me about it, blah, blah. Like she's telling me this story about how her and Erica got in this fight, and just vent kind of thing, tell me what's going on, and then I'll talk to them and make them feel better, or whatever.

This description of talk is very similar to that which each girl gave of how they used the phone.

In the interviews I presented to the girls a series of advertising from the 1960s to today that imaged the phone and cellular phone being used. Of the different ads there were two particular ads which each of the girls, whether they liked the image or not, acknowledged as being particularly realistic. Both of these images were from the same series of Bell advertisements as Image 2 discussed above. Like the girl calling home to see if there is anything mother needs, the values presented in the two which were used in the interviews were very traditional. In the first a girl is imaged on the phone calling a friend to tell them "Guess who asked me to the prom?" (Image 13). In the second a girl is curled up in front of the television, again calling a friend, with the message "Quick, Cindy - dash for your TV!" (Image 14). The reader of these images in the 1960s is being taught/encouraged to use the phone in a manner that will increase their popularity and make their lives more enjoyable. In both the emphasis is upon talking about 'a boy', whether its "the smoothest, handsomest boy we know" or "that dreamboat on the record". Along with these fun uses of the phone the girls are also impelled to use the technology in a polite and helpful manner: "The modern miss uses her phone in lots of ways - to say 'thank you', 'do come over', 'where have you been', and just 'thinking of

you!' And she finds that the more she uses her phone, the more friends she has and the smoother life seems to be!"

In the interviews the girls' responses, upon being presented with these images, were of self-recognition:

> That's like me - I always talk on the phone and watch t.v. at the same time. Always in front of the t.v. on the phone. Yeah, and I like talking about this. [motions to the image of 'Guess who asked me to the prom']
>
> *About boys?*
>
> Yeah about boys. My friends always do that 'Stephanie run to the t.v. look what's on the tv go to channel 8. look at the hot guy.' Exciting stuff. (Stephanie, 16)

> [Pointing to Image 13] This is me, this is totally me. That's true. They're describing me in that paragraph there. (Katherine, 17)

While the girls were very accepting of the 'realism' that the ads presented, they were unsure about the messages of being a 'good girl' they contained. The problem with these ads for the girls was the type of values being associated with the phone.

> I think like "a smart girl uses her phone in lots of ways, like calling home to let her family know she's going to be late" - its like playing up to the good girl image that everyone wanted to be, cause no one wanted to be the bad girl. Yeah, so I don't know it's kind of like phone propaganda like if you use the phone you'll be a good person. ...
>
> *What kind of ways do you think things have changed?*
>
> Um - I don't think you would ever see an ad like this now, cause its so common to use the phone, so no one would have to make an ad to say like "use your phone to call your friends to tell them that Jack asked you to the prom". But, um, nowadays, well I don't think there's as much of an emphasis to be a smart girl, especially when it, at least when it comes to the phone. Now its like be a smart girl and don't get pregnant. (Kirsten, 17)

> Wow, they're like the exact same, you know? They're telling you you'll be smarter, you'll be more cool, you can talk - like even this, the guy she likes - he's the most important guy in school, he's the best dancer, and he's the cutest, and of course its on the phone. Yeah, it hasn't changed much. I think they're targeting young girls cause, I don't know, maybe we're more impressionable. (Jessica, 17)

What comes out of these two readings of the ads is that, although society has changed dramatically from the time of these ads, what it means to use the phone and what use is appropriate for girls has not really altered. The emphasis may have shifted as to why a

girl should behave in a feminine manner from being popular to being 'safe', but the type of behavior that is the desired outcome of the message is very much the same.

For each girl, use of the phone in the ways shown in the ads - to call friends, to give advice and share news, were very similar to their own experiences. To the interviewees these uses were not something that only they did, but were was framed as 'normal' - for a teenage girl. They were, however, uses that they believed were specific to being a teen girl. Boys in particular did not use the phone in these ways.

> Well with girls and guys it's different. With guys you usually don't really talk about anything, just bullshit stuff, talk about anything that comes up. And with the girls you talk about the guys. Just like what kind of guys you like, what you're going to do the next day, what you did already, what you bought when you went shopping. With guys you don't really talk about anything - just like how was you day today and that's about it. (Stephanie, 16)

> If I call my boy - my guy friends they're like "yeah, okay, bye" and it's like 20 seconds so I don't really count it. But, yeah, so it's mostly my girlfriends. (Kayla, 17)

The uses that the girls reported as being male or female fit very closely with the stereotypes seen in magazine images, from the 1960s article on the teen phone company (Image 1) to the ad for Compaq e-business solutions (Image 11): it is girls who chat and gossip. Boys, in contrast, use the technologies in a matter-of-fact manner, placing calls 'for a reason'. The ideal of use for boys thus becomes very close to that which the Compaq ad presents as adult - it is efficient and businesslike use.

> Guys are, a lot of times they're not as good on the phone as girls are, its just like I don't know - a lot of them are just like not phone people [laughs]. (Roshni, 16)

> Its like "kay, what are we doing" kind of thing, not like long conversations, cause like my guy friends really hate talking on the phone.
>
> *Oh really?*
>
> Yeah, they're like "okay what are we doing lets go somewhere, do something". They don't want to talk on the phone. ...
>
> *But you think that girls like talking on the phone more?*

Yeah, I think so. Um, [laughs] I don't know. Probably cause usually girls are a little more chatty, gossipy, that kind of thing. That's usually what gets passed on the phone. (Lindsey, 17)

Despite these generalizations of phone use that most of the girls made, they also were quick to point out the exceptions. These exceptions were invariably male friends or boyfriends who they did speak to regularly and in depth.

There's one guy I talk to for like ever. And then sometimes I just talk to him for a while, I don't know, but usually it's like this one guy I talk to for like a long time. ...

Is he one of your best friends?

Yeah, we're really close. ...

The other guys you know, do you talk to them a lot?

No, not really, most guys aren't talkative on the phone. They're just like "okay, let's go do something" and you say "no" and they're just like "okay call you tomorrow". They don't like talk on the phone, it's just like a quick conversation. (Laura, 14)

My guy friends hate the phone, they're like "I can't stand it" and so yeah, I think girls are more comfortable, I think it comes with them talking on the phone so much.

Do you think guys talk to each other on the phone?

Not really, they're just like "yeah, we're going to play hockey, okay, bye".

You said you had a boyfriend? [she nods] *Do you talk to him much on the phone?*

Yeah.

But that's different than other guys?

Um-hum. Well he, yeah, I think he likes the phone better than I do. (Kayla, 17)

In each 'exceptional' boy's case, the difference in use that the girls mentioned was tied up in their relationship to the boy, although few made this connection. That the boys who were "phone people" were the boys who were close friends or boyfriends while all other boys fit into the stereotype that boys do not use the phone was unquestioned. What this suggests is that use of the phone for conversation between males and females is tied up in heterosexual tensions for the majority of teens. These tensions,

however, are veiled behind the belief that boys do not talk because being male is incompatible with being a 'phone person'.

The only girl to completely deny that there was any difference in conversational patterns was Jessica. She was also the only girl I interviewed who identified herself as lesbian and, therefore, was freed from the aforementioned heterosexual tensions.

You were saying you don't talk to many guys on the phone?

No.

Is there any difference in the conversation with the guys you do talk to?

Not really no, sometimes I don't talk about my love life that much because it's a little different, other than that its pretty much the same stuff.

So they're not any more or less -

Chatty - no. Cause my brother can talk on the phone for longer than I can. (Jessica, 17)

When she was later asked about calling a girl she liked she spoke of many of the same tensions - nervousness that you will have nothing to say, no reason to have called - that the other girls described as being part of talking to boys.

Overall, this account seems to suggest that despite the stereotype that boys talk less the differences may not be as large as the myth of the feminine telephone suggests. Following from the statistical account of phone use (Brandon & Brandon 1981) which reported that young teenage males talked at nearly the same rates as young teenage girls, I would suggest that the males are not actually talking that much less, but that their use becomes "invisible". As the boy's use is expected to be lesser, the nervousness that may restrict them from calling females is (mis)read as a natural propensity not to use the technology. The use they do make of the technology is simultaneously understood as having a different function than that of their female counterparts.

I think cause talking on the phone involves like thoughts and like - like somebody tells you something and you tell them what you feel about it. Like "Oh I can't believe that!" Boys

> really don't care I don't think. They're just like "Wow, your mom got mad at you, great...". (Kirsten, 17)
>
> It depends on who, but I notice like sometimes, like, ah, if I call up like my girlfriends I don't really have to have a reason to talk to her, like "I was just calling to see what's up". But to a guy it always seems like I need to have a question that I need to ask them, just in case he doesn't want to talk to me. [laughs] I don't know if that sounds strange, but when I call, in case he says "what do you want", I need to have a reason for calling him. Cause then if he doesn't we can just talk about something else, but in case he says "why are you calling me, what do you want to ask me?" (Katherine, 17)

As the above illustrates, there seems to be an acceptance of two central differences in the purposes that motivate boys and girls to use the phone. For the boys, the telephone in some fundamental sense remains a "businesslike" tool. It is used for a purpose, to make plans, whereas for the girls the conversation is the end in itself. In the girls' descriptions of talking with male friends there is a very strong sense that it is the boys who define the talk. The girls prepare "reasons" to have called in case their motives are questioned, in case their chosen use of the phone, just to find out how people are, is deemed insufficient. The realm of emotional talk is still defined as that which is feminine, the concern with others well-being is one that males do not partake in. The males who do are the exceptions - the boyfriends and the best friends. In attempting to contrast the boys' use to that presented in advertising, one runs quickly into a stumbling block: across all the decades boys are very rarely shown as users of the telephone. In part, this is a factor of the location from which the images were taken - teenzines oriented to girls. Where males of any age group are imaged, the image is one of efficient, businesslike talk. This can be seen in both the Ban-Lon ad (Image 3) and the Ericsson ad (Image 9). In the first, the male is imaged as waiting impatiently, while the female figures block his access to technology. Their calls, we read off his disposition, are long and involved, whereas his would be meaningful and important. In fact, anything he has to say must be important for he is the only one with a body from which to speak. This is again seen in the Ericsson ad in which "you are everywhere". In both

cases the male user is imaged in a position of power, a position very different from the emotional talk women are portrayed as participating in. The ideas of use, which the girls related in the interviews, are very close to the stereotypes that these images present.

The mirroring of advertising images in ideas of use did not, in contrast, occur to the same extent in discussions of the cellular phone. In large part this might be explained by the expectation that the cellular phone, because of its cost, is used by both girls and boys in a manner similar to how they report that boys use the stationary phone: as a tool to make plans.

> *So if you had a cell phone what kinds of calls do you think you'd use it for?*
>
> Probably just whenever I really needed to make a call cause it's kind of expensive to use your cell phone. So, you know, if I needed a ride from somewhere, or if Zack was online and I really needed to make a quick call. I wouldn't like gab for hours on it. (Jessica, 17)

> Yeah, I usually use it just to make plans. Like I get 200 free minutes a month and I usually only use about 60. And they're all just like quick calls like "Oh, we're at Dairy Queen". Or something like that, I never have like big huge calls while I'm like walking through the mall talking to people on my phone or anything like that. I don't really see the point of it, cause like I'd rather be like "I'm at the mall come down and see me" or something like that. (Kirsten, 17)

These descriptions of using the cellular phone, which were consistent throughout all of the interviews, suggest a much different use than the STMicroelectronics (Image 12) and the Compaq ads (Image 11) suggest girls make of the phone. Where these images suggest that girls use the phone to 'talk, talk, talk', a use which is 'other' to the efficient use of adults, the girls state that they are using it in a fashion that closely resembles how it is being marketed to the adult population: as a tool in a face-paced world. The advertising images, by mis-assigning a stereotyped behavior from the telephone onto the cellular phone, create symbolic connections for the cellular phone, thus making it more familiar and understandable to the adult market.[12]

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[12] The process whereby technologies when they come into widespread use, or are domesticated, "is fundamentally a conservative process, as consumers look to incorporate new technologies into

In questioning the girls on what they believed motivated the differences between the use males and females had for the two technologies they turned to explanations rooted in biology and what was natural. This was most clearly stated by Kirsten in response to a question posed as to what it would be like to be a boy rather than a girl:

> I think it would be a lot different and - [laughs] - I can't even imagine. I know that it would be really different - I don't know I've never really thought about how it would be different to be a boy. I mean I'd probably be happy if I was a boy - like I think there are huge differences between being a boy and being a girl, like everything - emotionally and physically, mentally - just like the way that guys think. (Kirsten, 17)

Differences between males and females are understood as being fundamental and biologically determined by the majority of the girls. Thus, the differences in phone use were associated with these fundamental differences. Boys do not talk as much because they are naturally different. The few boys to whom they were close being the 'exceptions'.

Chapter Summary

This reliance that the girls make on what is natural for males and females returns us to the idea that technology is a masculine culture. The interpretations that they make of technological use and what is proper are overwhelmingly similar to the uses and ideals presented in the advertisements. That which is accepted and 'normal' is that of the advertised image. That which is an exception in use is that which deviates from the norms of gender interaction with technology. The uses which boys make of the technology are firmly placed within the world of power - the boys' use is efficient and businesslike, it is not like their own use which they degrade and consider 'gossip'. What these interactions point to is that the technology does not have an intrinsically gendered

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the patterns of their everyday lives and their control of that structure" (Silverstone and Haddon 1996: 60). Thus the cellular phone is understood through the frame of reference which exists for the technology which it is sold as 'most like', the telephone.

nature - the special boys are frequent users, therefore there is nothing inherent to being male that precludes use. But this use is rendered invisible within a socio-historical context that derides girls use as a waste of time and boys activities as purposeful and meaningful.

In turn, for the girls the impact of definitions of gender were invisible. For example, as I will draw out in the next chapter, all of the girls said that the boys they knew went out more frequently and with less parental interaction than they did. Yet, this freedom to go out with friends was never linked to their non-use of the technology. Instead, both were seen as natural facts of biology. To take an active stance and use the technology differently, as liberal feminism would suggest, is to ignore that these users do not see their use as constructed, but as natural. While they certainly recognize that the values and demands of being a girl have changed, as is reflected in their readings of the Bell Telephone images from the 1960s, they do not see how the uses are constructed as gendered. Nor do they see the power relations implicit in their readings of how boys and girls use the objects. The proposition which ecofeminists make that technology is inherently masculine is equally problematic. For while their use is gendered, there is nothing to suggest that rejecting the technology would create any change. To 'blame' the technology is to overlook more important factors in the masculinization of technology, namely the ways that different tasks are defined as 'technical' and the boundaries between public and private space. It is to these two 'masculinizing' aspects of technology that I will now turn in attempting to understand what the girls' use of the home phone reflects about their social location.

Chapter Three

The Telephone and the Culture of the Bedroom

Arguably, the lives of teenage girls' are some of the most structured in western society today. Teenage females are subordinate in both age and gender to adults and males. These power relations can, in turn, be further complicated through intersections with race, class and sexual orientation. For the young woman, life is structured by parental rules - rules that are often gendered in nature. In the eyes of the teens' parent, it is the private sphere of the home that is "safe", while the public world of the street presents a multitude of threats to the well being of the girls. Thus, her experience of being a youth is deeply impacted by her gender: she is not free to roam the streets, to rebel, in the same ways as her male counterparts. Simultaneously, because she is a youth, she is also in a process of self-discovery and of discovering her role as an adult. The roles that she learns have, in turn, been deeply impacted by gender, particularly the traditional expectation that a woman's duties are those of the private sphere. It is through this dual structuring of her life, both at the present moment and in the options that are available for her future, that the division between the private and public spheres plays a critical role in the life of the teen girl.

In this chapter I will focus upon the telephone and how it is both idealized in magazines and used by girls, as they deal with the current and future demands of domesticity while creating a space for leisure. As was addressed in the last chapter, the isolation of women within the home, and the potential that the phone created for external contact, was central to the feminization of the technology. Yet the telephone is not only a tool used in the home, it is also a tool of business and the public sphere. In analyzing advertisements from the past 40 years it will be shown that the options that are presented to girls for using the technology have undergone little change. The phone is

to be used, according to the ads, when undertaking tasks of helping and of assisting, in a manner that is polite, courteous and above all, feminine. Girls may be encouraged to use the phone as a part of their work in the public sphere, but in a manner that reflects their subordinate status. They may use it as a secretary, but never as a corporate executive.

In the private sphere these traditional ideals are again imaged as the phone is shown as a tool used to create a space of privacy and to enable leisure, while under the control of parents. Unlike the conversations at school, there are no voices that can overhear, no prying eyes to avoid. The phone, thus, becomes central to a culture of the bedroom, while simultaneously creating a zone of privacy within the home. These traditional ideals of gender presented in the ads, although they do not match with the current proclamations that technology is erasing the divisions between public and private, will be compared to the lived experiences of girls. Through this comparison some of the tensions between the traditional ideals and the current theories which postulate that there are no boundaries will be discussed.

Youth Culture(s)

In the popular media, and in some academic accounts, youth culture has been examined as homogeneous: the youth of the 1950s symbolized optimism and vitality; the 1960s framed youth as delinquency; today youth are categorized as the 'wasted generation', or as 'generation X (or Y)' (Wyn and White 1997:77). Rather than these universalizing images Wyn and White (1997) argue that youth need to be understood both as heterogeneous and as connected with wider social divisions and historical contexts. Thus, rather than seeing all young people of today as apathetic, it should be recognized that some are highly motivated and goal-oriented. At the same time, if

society does frame youth in these ways, there are arguably factors that connect these individuals, such as high youth unemployment. For the individual, therefore, being a young person is not only being "a youth", but also being working class, female, white, and lesbian in a particular social, political and economic climate. The 'culture' of this girl, the way that her social group gives expression to its social and material life experiences, is one that develops as an "active process which marks out different relationships to the dominant ideologies and values of society" (73). A youth culture can, therefore, never be created in a vacuum. It is always influenced by the structures that impact upon its members.

One of the first places where the study of youth began to directly address the impact of socio-historical context was in the work on subcultures, notably Dick Hebdige's (1979) *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*. Here youth were no longer seen as a monolithic mass, but as divided along lines of class and race, like the rest of British society. These divisions were seen as leading to the formation of subcultures, which were defined as "the status and meaning of revolt, the idea of style as a form of Refusal, the elevation of crime into art (even though, in our case, the 'crimes' are only broken codes)" (Hebdige 1979: 2). This definition of subculture, however, is problematic because of its focus on style. Throughout Hebdige's research it was the objects that became the focus of analysis – how were clothing objects manipulated, what did hairstyles and motorcycles represent – while the links across generations were overlooked. As Wyn and White (1997) write:

> As a distinctive 'way of life', culture refers to specific patterns of social interaction and the expressive form of people's social and material life experiences. Analysis of cultural formation therefore means going beyond the concept of subculture which is the staple of much work done in youth studies. While subcultural analysis has led to many insights about young people, and highlighted the diversity that exists, there is nevertheless a tendency in such work to essentialise youth cultural formation - that is, to focus on superficial aspects of culture, such as style, and the difference between young people and

> adults, while ignoring the continuities which exist across age boundaries (Wyn and White 1997: 73).

Rather than a singular focus upon style that is removed from social context, how the behavior of subcultural members is related to their social location also needs to be questioned.

One of the continuities that was overlooked in this early research on youth was gender. Due to the emphasis on delinquency in this work, when girls did make an appearance it was usually in a marginal position fulfilling a stereotyped vision of femininity (Lees 1986:14), such as mother or girlfriend. Thus, "several decades of work by male social scientists had done little or nothing to challenge the popular view that youth was boys being boys, usually in the street, while girls went on practicing being little wives and mothers somewhere else, usually indoors, where from this vantage point they were both out of sight and out of mind" (Cohen 1997: 202). While adolescence is defined in a primarily masculine manner, such as youth as problem or youth as transition from family to work, it remains a discourse that girls are trapped within, yet simultaneously marginal to. It is this contradiction, between the normative understandings of femininity and youth, which is particularly problematic. The location of girls on the margins of subcultures, where the 'resistance' of traditional values is the objective of the group, draws direct attention to this conflict. For what subcultures display in an exaggerated form is the ideal of youth: freedom. Youth is a time, according to current mythology, in which one resists and challenges authority in an attempt to define him or herself. For girls, however, this resistance is complicated. To be feminine is to be concerned with helping and the emotions of others. To discard these ideals in order to be independent, is to choose not to be feminine.

Philip Cohen, reflecting upon his work on youth in the 1970s, states that what was most problematic was "not that we failed to deal adequately with the issue of girls' sexuality and social subordination, but that we did not devote enough attention to the assumption of gender roles, or the function of masculine ideals in the local culture" (103). It was, indeed, the acceptance of gender roles and ideals of what was appropriate for males and females that made girls invisible to writers such as Cohen. The boys were out and were public with their thoughts, while the girls were hidden and inaccessible, in the house playing "mother"[1]. As Angela McRobbie and Jenny Garber (1991) argue:

> It might be the case that girls are not just marginal to the post-war youth culture but located structurally in an altogether different position. If women are marginal to the male cultures of work, it is because they are central and pivotal to a subordinate sphere. They are marginal to work because they are central to the family. The marginality of girls in these 'spectacular' male-focused subcultures might redirect our attention away from this arena towards more immediately recognizable teenage and pre-teenage female spheres like those forming around teenybop stars and pop-music industry. (3)

As they suggest, the focus on males in youth studies may very well be an outcome of the public nature of boys' cultures. For females, the traditional domain has been that of the home, of the domestic, private sphere. Youth studies, by focusing on the group as age defined, misses the importance of gender that makes girls' experience of youth markedly different from that of boys, and, therefore, of that represented in research on youth. By focusing only upon that which is public, which fits with the gender of the researcher, the girls who are in a space foreign to the researcher, are missed. Thus, the recognition of the boundary between public and private is crucial to any attempt to explore teen girls' lives, for it is this boundary which renders girls' experiences invisible

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[1] One could in turn criticize his reading of what the girls were doing inside their homes. If they were indeed invisible, it is to gender assumptions that he must have turned to state that their activities were domestic duty oriented.

in the majority of youth studies. To make girls visible, the contradictions and the intersections between meanings of being female and being young need to be brought to the forefront. Additionally the connections between women across ages need to be made salient. In looking to the phone it must be questioned, therefore, not just whether girls talk a great deal, but do/did their mothers? What similarities exist in how the technology is gendered over time? How have the idealizations of how women use the phone, both at home and at work, shifted? Having said this, it is equally important not to overemphasize the links between individuals of the same gender, for gender is only one of many influences upon the subject.

Youth and gender, while being two social relations the individual is involved in, further intersect with race, class, sexual orientation and numerous other social locations. In discussing these multiple social locations Wyn and White (1995) argue for a reconceptualization of youth, which focuses upon the power relations that influence and shape a young person's life:

> Our discussion of social practices has pointed out that traditionally the transition to adulthood has been seen as an individual issue, focusing on young people as the potential bearers of skills to 'make something of themselves'. Taking an approach that places the *development of social practices* at its center, by contrast, exposes the power relations that are an integral part of the process of growing up. Young people are engaging with powerful institutional processes as they develop their identities, their perspectives on life and as they create the spaces within which they can participate in society. (italics in original; Wyn and White 1995: 118)

These multiple institutions must be remembered in studying youth in order to avoid essentializing the group and negating the importance of their subjective experiences. In choosing to focus upon teenage girls the differences that exists between individuals due to class, sexual orientation and race, while being somewhat excluded from this analysis because of the unfortunate need for focus, must never be underestimated. Nevertheless, continuities do exist. Teenage girls, when dealt with as a general group,

can be seen as implicated in two particular sets of power relations: that of male/female and of parent/child. Both of these divisions impose divergent and interacting expectations upon those whom they impact. In this chapter, I will focus upon the first of these polarizations; that between male and female as it is played out through the division of public and private spheres. Through the telephone, it will be argued, gender expectations are taught such that what is ideal for girls is associated with the private sphere, regardless of where it is performed.

Private and Public Worlds

Much of the academic work that has been undertaken in the exploration of gender has relied upon the division between the public and private spheres. As Gamamikow and Purvis (1983) write "the public/private split is a metaphor for the social patterning of gender, a description of sociological practice, and a category grounded in experience" (cited in Rakow, 1989). This division has a long history, as Rosalind Sydie (1987) recounts, which finds its roots in the association of women and nature in the work of Aristotle (3). In Western Europe a dichotomy developed such that "the private, domestic world of women can be contrasted with the public world of action in which men order and control nature" (5). Although, as Sydie points out, similar divisions in tasks have been found in many cultures, it is not the actual duties that remain constant, but that it is males who are assigned the tasks that receive the most prestige. Thus the public/private division characterizes a set of power relations in which men "control the social meanings and resources to define what they do as acting within the public sphere and to control the private sphere" (Rakow 1989: 51). It is this power to define that gives prestige to male activities, which are therefore located in the public world. In turn, activities of the private sphere, such as phone use to maintain family ties, are denigrated

because women perform them. Talking on the phone, therefore, is not inherently any less important than fixing the car, but because it has become defined as a duty of women, it has been deemed less demanding and less important. Central to the division of spheres is the association of technology with the public world of men. Technology is an aspect of society that we see as defining the future and as essential to production. To be involved in it is to be one of those who defines the future – a very powerful position.

In contrast to the computer, the telephone, as discussed in the last chapter, is one of the few technologies to be associated with women due to its location in the home and women's use of it to assist with their duties. The telephone has become critical to the maintenance of family connections, while also providing a release for women tied to domestic duties. If girls are expected to be learning these domestic and caretaking roles, then use of the telephone in a gender appropriate manner, should be an incorporated aspect. Girls, like their mothers, are also tied to the home. As Angela McRobbie (1991) writes:

> Working-class girls are one of the most powerless sectors of society. Their lives are more highly structured than their male peers and their actions are closely monitored by the school, by youth leaders and parents. The girls are firmly rooted in the home and local environment, and lack the social knowledge and expertise which derives from being able to visit and explore different parts of the city by themselves in the way boys can. (37)

It is due to this structure and isolation that the telephone becomes central to the lives of girls. Some theorists, however, have proposed that the differentiation between the public and private spheres is disintegrating today. If the divisions are being altered in a substantial way the words of McRobbie, cited above, should no longer hold true. The lives of girls should be no more structured and no more homebound than those of their male counterparts. The construction of the telephone, as a technology that has been

feminized largely due to its location in the domestic sphere and its use in maintaining interpersonal relationships, should be changing as well if it no longer holds that tasks are divided between the public and private spheres. Following this, if the spheres are blurring such that there will be nothing to hold girls to the home, it should be reflected in the fields that make the phone meaningful – particularly its use and marketing. Thus, I will look first to the idealization of telephone use presented in popular culture images that are directed towards teenage girls. Teenzines, being one of the few media directly targeted to teen girls, becomes an especially important window into this meaning-making. Whether traditional relations are being reproduced or destroyed should be apparent in the shifts over time in the idealized images of technological use that the magazines present.

The image of girls spending their youth learning their future duties in the private, domestic world, resonates in the advertising images of the 1960s. The series of ads that Bell Telephones ran during 1960, which were introduced in the last chapter, give a clear indication of the expectation that use of the telephone would fall in line with traditional gender ideals. Being responsible by letting your parents know where you were going to be was a central feature in all of the images that presented a girl outside of the home. The remainder of the images were of girls making calls from within the homes in a "thoughtful" manner. For example, the September installment (Image 15) of the series highlights the expectation that a girl's primary responsibility is to the family and the domestic world. The image presented is of a girl talking on the phone, with a child, her "cousin", sitting on her lap and playing with a doll. The ad reads: "'She'll be here all afternoon and we're having loads of fun. She's a little doll.' It's good to have the phone right there when you want to chat with your best friend." The text, by drawing the reader's attention to the parallel between the little girl and the doll, points to the teenage

girl as moving from playing with toy dolls, to playing with little children who are dolls. Both of these behaviors are very gendered. The next logical step for her is to have her own doll/child rather than only having one on loan. The image mirrors her (ideal) life of the future: alone at home taking care of a child and relying upon a phone to reach the outside world. The remainder of the text reinforces gender appropriate use of the phone: "How satisfying when you want to say a special 'thank you' to someone you care for. How helpful when somebody is sick and depends on you to keep up with class assignments." She becomes the caretaker not only of the child, but also of her peers. By repeatedly referring to the teenage girl reader as 'you', the reader is called in to see herself acting out these roles, the reward for which will be popularity: "But best of all, your telephone helps to keep you right in the middle of all the fun!" Through the phone you are present and a participant, even when you are absent and alone.

Images of girls in the public world of work and power, are very seldom shown in the magazines at this time. One of the few exceptions to this is one of the Bell series (Image 16). It reads, "Hi, Dad ... may I come up to the office to see you? ... Thoughtful of Peggy to phone her Dad first, her good telephone manners will be an asset when she has her own career." Use of the phone is again oriented to training in femininity, for what is crucial is that she be polite and courteous on the phone. The image, by stating that she is calling father, reinstates the place of the male figure of authority: a figure that will parallel those of her future for whom she must politely answer the phone. She is not in training to be the person called, but the person who directs the calls. The importance of this feminine behavior is reinforced as the ad closes through its reminder to the reader of how well liked they will be for proper (feminine) use of the phone: "But it's a nice thing to do and you'll see how much people appreciate it."

The importance of feminine skills is visible throughout the advertising images of the 1960s, but as was discussed in the last chapter, the images that appear in advertising have changed dramatically over time in their relationship to the two spheres. This is particularly true of the 1970s. At this time the images in the magazines were much more oriented towards a girl culture that occurred outside of the home. The girls were imaged riding bikes and hiking; rarely were they shown at home. Simultaneously, the prevalence of images of the telephone in the magazines decreased dramatically. In part this could be due to the telephone company's knowledge that the majority of girls, particularly those who read teenzines, were already well accustomed to using the phone and did not need to be taught this behavior. It may also reflect the impact of feminism during the period that helped to create a new space such that the previously defined feminine roles, which included telephone use, were no longer the only option.

The impact of feminism, and the new idealization of independence, resonates in an image for Jonathan Logan clothing from 1970 (Image 17). Here two girls are shown at a phone booth, one talking while the other watches. At their feet sits luggage; on their bodies matching outfits in "nautical" stripes. These girls are apparently travelling, for with their "instant wardrobe of matched multiples ... they go a long way!" The convenience of their "instant wardrobe" implies that independence need not be at the price of beauty or femininity, however, their freedom (they are imaged alone free of any reference to parental figures) is tempered. They both have their heads tilted down, eyes averted, certainly not the direct gaze one would expect of confident world travelers. Their use of the phone also points to grounding and connection. The phone, like the luggage, suggests contact with somewhere distant, but in polarized ways. Through the phone, the voyager remains still and "safe"; through travel the body is transported into the unknown. By their use of the phone they are located between the two, somewhat

adventurous, yet still 'in touch'. Similarly they are outside the private realm, but their gaze and stance place them firmly within expected gender norms of demure femininity.

These new liberal ideas presented in the advertisements of the 1970s do not necessarily point to any change in lived experience, as is reflected in the research of Angela McRobbie (1977) on being a teen girl. Indeed, while the ideal may have shifted, the lived experience appears to have remained remarkably stable. The importance of caretaking and domestic sphere training, shown in the ads of the 1960s, is reflected in McRobbie's work in the late 1970s on working-class girls in Britain. Here McRobbie argues that the period between the ages of 13 and 15 is a flowering of female culture for girls, where the family becomes preferred to the world of schools, and girls learn the values necessary for their return to the house and family. According to the girls she interviewed, the center of socializing is a cohesive group of female friendships, where boys were much talked about, but still distant. School was merely a place they could be together: "they were *in* school, but not *at* school" (1991: 58). What was central was the home:

> The ideas and values with which they preferred to identify were those of their mothers and other female members of the family. These were values that connected femininity with motherhood and the home. (1991: 58)

The pleasure these girls had was from time spent together, at each other's homes, at school, and occasionally at youth clubs, but the shadow of the upcoming restrictions on their lives was a perceptible overtone in all their activities. They realized that being a couple and raising children would soon confine them to "the much less public sphere of house and husband" (1991: 58). Thus their activities were, to varying degrees, training for this future.

There is, between the ideal of freedom presented in the ads and the lived experience of domesticity, a great divide. This tension could be read as an indication

that advertising images are merely "made up", that they are nothing more than fantasy. In contrast, I would suggest that the discrepancy involves social location, which is played out through the presentation of ideals that are fantastic, to differing extents, to different individuals, but read by all as "realistic". Class considerations are a particularly pertinent aspect of this distance between image and lived experience of the telephone in the 1970s. For while the ads and research are both products of the 1970s, the work of McRobbie focuses upon the experiences of working-class girls, while the consumerism of teenzines is directed towards a more middle-class girl. The values that these magazines were trying to sell were those of a middle-class feminism (notably in a very watered-down fashion), which may not reflect the lived experiences of working- or middle-class girls. Thus the image may be a fantasy because of its distance from experience, but it is not presented as fantasy. Rather this freedom is shown as a possibility that 'real' girls have, an option that they can choose. All of the factors which make this potential differentially plausible for different individuals are overlooked in the ideal world of advertising.

As we move into the 1980s, the advertising images shift again with the trends of the historical moment. Rather than the abstract freedom of the 1970s, the images of the 1980s reflect the 'power suit' ideal of the time. Thus, the ads that used or sold phones during the 1980s frequently imaged a business setting. Yet, despite changes in the overall ideals presented, what the phone represented was constant: in female hands the phone is a symbol of subservience. An ad for Jockey for Her (Image 18), for example, works around a photo of a model getting ready for her day. She stands in 'her room', dressed in underwear, putting on makeup and talking on the phone. The text reads, "Look who's wearing Jockey now. She's looking for comfort. She's Sharon O'Brien. Top fashion model, actress, singer, portrait artist." The ideal presented to the

girl reader is of a woman who can do everything, yet is still feminine – though it is a particularly sexualized femininity. Sharon O'Brien is an image of post-feminism: "equal" through all of her accomplishments, but still beautiful and desirable. As a reader we admire the model and want to be her. But in order to be like her - head thrown back in an orgasmic position, lipstick in her fingers partially raised, a clam shaped compact at crotch level – we must recognize that our most desirable quality is our sexuality.

In the advertisement the telephone also works in a second way, it signifies privacy. By being on the phone the model's attention is necessarily in another space, the camera is seemingly invisible to her. As we look upon the ad, our presence unacknowledged, we are forced to become voyeurs. In reading the advertisement, we see the model undressed, not for us to admire but because this is how she is comfortable. The image works as a snapshot, a glimpse into the everyday life of this model, into her natural habitat. The text in the advertisement speaks only of her, we are not asked into it. The phone in turn reinforces that we, the reader, are outside of the action: we do not know what is said or who is saying it, all we can see is her reaction. All we can do is to believe that upon purchase of the underwear we will be as accomplished, as sexually confident, and as pleasured by those who call us as Sharon O'Brien.[2]

A series of Esprit ads from the same period (1985) stand in contrast to the above Jockey for Her ad. In these ads, the location shifts to the public sphere, as the phone becomes a tool of work for the women imaged (Image 19, 20, 21). Two of these women are receptionists, the third a mail order phone representative for Esprit. In these images, the phones are not only the tools of their work, but they become toys. The fun these women have with these phones/toys, jumping role and being entangled in the cords, is

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[2] Similar trends can also be seen in the Maidenform ad from the same period discussed in the last chapter.

apparently a reflection of how much fun their jobs are working for Esprit and answering phones. Each of the images is accompanied by a short biography of the employee that reflects the individuality of each woman. But this is individuality deeply tempered by traditional conservative values.

For example, one of the advertisements images Mam Deakin, the Esprit Hong Kong Receptionist, (Image 19) jumping rope over a phone cord with receivers at both ends. The text reads:

> Snakes are awful. I'm glad I work at Esprit because its fun to be with young people and not have to wear high heeled shoes. I think living together is a good idea because you don't need a piece of paper if you love somebody. I want to marry a rich man though, because I think money is important...

The phone in the image works in two ways, first by signifying something familiar and fun. The women play with the phones, in turn their work with the phone is also "fun". These women may be involved in the public world of work, but it is not at a demanding level, rather work becomes like play where the phone is the toy. Indeed the toy that the phone becomes, a skipping rope, reflects the femininity of the job (and also its repetitive nature). Through the ad the girl readers are sold two things they know and enjoy, the phone and fashion. Esprit, in turn, presents itself as involving consumers at a deeper lever – it shows the reader that people just like you are part of the company, part of the production, not just consumers of whom they will take advantage. But the options of work they are presented with remain very traditionally female. None of the women are shown working as designers or marketers or accountants. The phone, although in the public sphere, does not become a symbol of power, it remains a sign of subservience because of its definition in association with female (and therefore lesser) tasks. Thus, while on the one hand, suggesting individuality and fun, the phone also signifies traditional ideals of being feminine. This is reflected in the autobiography of Mam

Deakin which beings with - "you don't need a piece of paper if you love somebody" - but concludes by reaffirming very traditional ideals – "I want to marry a rich man though". The phone parallels this discrepancy, as it is both a tool of fun and self-expression, while reinforcing very traditional roles of what part of the public world women can take-up. The aims of Esprit in presenting these images seems to be to show "real" people who are expressing themselves through the clothes. Thus, as a reader, you associate the purchase of Esprit goods with individuality, yet this is an individuality that does not question traditional values. Indeed, the consumption of this individualism entails taking on values that mask subordination through an emphasis on fun.

While images of girls at work have become increasingly common since the Bell ads of the 1960s, the change in what is expected has been much less dramatic, moving only from "polite" to "fun". These images, which Jockey and Esprit present, are particularly interesting when considered in reference to a survey that *Seventeen* published in March 1980, on the ideals of its readers. They write:

> The surveyed girls are not Suzy-Stay-at-Homes: 87 percent say they will probably work after marriage, and well over half plan to work after having children. Times are clearly changing, whether because of inflation or the women's movement of both. Nonetheless, the girls are open-minded: Nearly 62 percent agree that "being a wife and mother is a career in itself," even if it's not for them. (115)

The main motive for choosing a job? Salary, followed by challenge. These results suggest, therefore, that it is not for "fun" and marriage that these girls are searching, but independence and a greater sense of equality. In the advertisements, the main ideal presented is independence, which through the format of advertising is associated with the phone, such that the reader sees the phone as a symbol of feminine independence. In turn, when the girls who have read these images leave school and look for careers, it may be to these occupations that they will turn, for it is these roles that have been

presented as offering both success and fun. However untrue the promises of the advertisements may be they have become accepted and naturalized through their prevalence. As these images are naturalized, and being a receptionist is seen as exciting, independent and prestigious, the traditional and continued power divisions that these occupations represent begin to disappear.

There is, however, nothing inherent to the telephone that renders work done with it less important. Rather, the telephone has a complex relationship to the public/private sphere division, particularly in terms of power relations and control of the "object". Lana Rakow (1988) reflects upon this by arguing that, while on the one hand the phone is a technology of the domestic sphere, on the other it is a technology of the world of economics and politics. In the public sphere the telephone enables the links between "accomplices and competitors" (203) that perpetuate divisions of power across time and space. It is through these connections Rakow argues that power is moved even farther from the reach of women:

> The telephone, then, may have had a role in the reorganization of economic and social life that created a dramatic spatial split between public and private, *making what had been women's ideological place more than ever women's physical space*. As the boundaries of women's private sphere changed shape, encompassing more physical territory and connecting them in an irregular pattern to people and places across distances, done in part by means of the telephone, the boundaries of men's public sphere receded beyond sight and grasp. *The telephone did not bring Prospect women closer to the world of power and decision-making but took power and decision-making further away.* (italics in original; 203)

In the private sphere the telephone creates a way to keep in touch without ever having to leave home. It allows one to maintain family ties, give support, and gain advice across large expanses of land without the need for face-to-face interaction. In the public world of politics and economics the phone enables deals to be made and broken at a distance. The public sphere, through this technology, moves away from the physical

world to a realm where it is untouchable, thus rendering those not on the line unable to interact and stimulate change.[3] The images presented to girls, however, are not of occupations that create the possibility to be 'on the line' in the public sphere. Rather the options shown are restricted to roles very much in line with a feminine ideal. What is emphasized to the girl is the use of the phone for expression, communication, and assistance, not for self-assertion and deal making.

Currently there is a firm understanding among teenage girls, given the prevalent idealization of technology, that technological competence is correlated with power. A report in *Newsday* (2000), entitled "Millennial Girls", quotes a number of teenage girls speaking of their expectations of computers and gender relations in the future. One states: "Women won't just type anymore on computers, ... When we graduate, it's going to be a women's world". Yet underlying this optimism is conflict and confusion over what it will mean to be a woman in the future:

> For many Long Island girls, the future seems limitless: Yvonne (Ivy) Ozuzu, 17, of Coram, wants to be a thoracic surgeon, and insists, "I can definitely become anything and do anything I want to. We [girls] are so daring and we're ready to do anything." Still, Ivy predicts there will be a price to pay for so much freedom. "It's going to be hard for the children of tomorrow to grow up," she explained, "because my kids won't see me as much as I see my mother. Twenty years from now I'll be 37, and I hope to have four kids. I'm not really much for marriage. I'll probably be divorced, driving a BMW, living life and being happy on my way to my 40th birthday."

That this is what one girl idealizes and imagines her future to be reflects a huge shift in ideals from those of the past. This is not the perfect nuclear family, with loving husband and domestic bliss, but a new ideal where the expectation that one will be other-oriented as a good woman, is replaced with a perspective that focuses on "me". Yvonne's words

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[3] Part of the importance of this is that it does draw attention to the recognition that the telephone, which was touted as "revolutionizing" and placing power in the hands of all, has in no way done so. Rather it has created channels whereby power is further and further removed from any intersection with those outside power.

reflect a belief that the old values are crumbling, as individual happiness and achievement become more important. Today's high divorce rates and increasing numbers of single-mothers have clearly impacted these words, but the barriers and the demands they create are invisible. The belief that one can have everything and be anything has created a set of ideals that reflect in their contradiction of traditionalism (four kids) and liberalism (thoracic surgeon) the confusion of being a girl today. This is the confusion of being taught you can do anything, but that you should still want to be a feminine (in order to be desirable), without any acknowledgment of the potential limits that you will face.

The discussions of careers which teen magazines present, however, remain much more limited than what these self-proclamations declare. Indeed, careers of any kind, beyond modeling and acting, are rarely discussed. Evans, Rutbery, Sather and Turner (1991) conducted a content analysis of contemporary teen magazines and found that

> The few career articles in these magazines revealed no substantial orientation for personal enhancement through professional development and leadership - that is, corporate business, the sciences, entrepreneurial activities or academic life. In fact, the most salient career emphasis was modeling. (112)

In some regards these results should not be surprising, given the nature of magazines. As texts which are produced and printed to sell products through the selling of idealized images, it logically follows that they would rely on glamour over realism, for who would not rather be Buffy the Vampire Slayer than a University professor? The magazines, particularly in their career sections, are telling the reader that the options they discuss are those that are realistic and viable, but none, as Evans et al. (1982) write, are leadership oriented. Indeed, other than modeling, the women shown at work in teenzines are generally engaging in office work, where the emphasis in the articles is

upon the employee's fashion sense and telephone skills. And, when the only options presented are model, actress and low-level office work, there is, for the majority of girls, very little space to choose.

In magazines more directly oriented towards women, but frequently read by the older teenage girls[4], the telephone is frequently used as a prop for work in both fashion layouts and articles that discuss "getting ahead at work". Throughout the focus on work in magazines it is a 'respectable' femininity that is sold: "Wear what you feel spectacular in - if it isn't slashed at the navel" (Cosmopolitan, February 2000). Use of the phone is in turn central to success, but like clothing the telephone must be used in a way that reflects proper femininity:

> Phone Tricks: A lot of your business life is conducted by phone. Here are a few pointers:
> - Even though somebody has accepted your call, always ask if the person is busy. You may be babbling away, and she or he may be loathing your long explanation of the issue at hand.
> - Thank people who are "bigger than you" for calling back - nothing says they have to. (Cosmopolitan, February 2000)

The "tricks" that the article suggests are surprisingly similar to the qualities that Dad would have been proud of you for in the 1960s. Again it is being polite that is emphasized in order to get ahead. These hints do not suggest aggression or self-assertion, but a submissive approach where you recognize the favor that people are doing you by even returning your calls. It is on these interpersonal skills that the weight of success is placed, not the individual's competencies or productive skills. Getting along, making your boss look good, taking criticism well, are the skills to be treasured. Thus, even if they are images of women in the business world, the approach the reader

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[4] Both the girls' that I interviewed and those interviewed by Dawn Currie (1999) stated that they frequently read certain adult magazines such as Mademoiselle, Vogue and Cosmopolitan because the magazines oriented to teenage girls are 'too young' and do not have 'substantial' content.

is being counseled to adopt is still very much that of the diminutive homemaker. What the girls are being taught is that the way to succeed is polite communication, which will eventually be recognized, cross your fingers. The gendered nature of this advice is clear when it is compared with the common expectation that boys will 'get out there' and act assertively.

Throughout magazines, and the majority of popular culture, the tools of work that women are shown with remain those of assisting and helping rather than of making: they use a telephone, not a hammer.[5] The one technology that does appear in magazine images repeatedly with women, other than the phone, is the computer. The imaging of this technology as being used by both men and women, may suggest that there are indeed changes occurring in definitions of public and private spheres. Through computers, particularly the Internet, the belief that technology can revolutionize our lives and erase boundaries has been forwarded – for if in cyberspace we are freed of our bodies, what could tie us to our gender roles?

Breaking up the Public/Private Dichotomy?

Over the past 40 years there has been a notable change in the opportunities that are available to girls. This is reflected in the shifts in advertising images, for example the increasing representation of women in the public sphere.[6] Paralleling this trend there has been a decrease in the appearance of parents within the images, to the point that today parents have become nearly invisible in teenzines. It has been suggested

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[5] In comparing these two technologies I am attempting to draw on two stereotyped images to highlight the differences in meaning between what girls and boys are shown as doing. The differences in one's future between being a secretary and a construction worker stem not in the level of education or skill they require, but from a huge differential in pay that gives value to the work associated with males over that of females.

[6] The images cannot be read as 'reality', however, for they may be presenting a more conservative or more radical view of the reality of women in the public sphere of work and politics than is felt in lived experience.

that what has occurred is a shift in the boundaries of the public and private spheres, perhaps even a reversal. In contrast, I will argue that what the images present is a new ideal of independence which masks values that are fundamentally unchanged. Although the images focus upon being an individual and making it on your own, they still present normative femininity as critical to success.

In McRobbie's (1991) work on girls' cultures, she contends that girls are more controlled and more constrained to the home than their male peers. In contrast to the culture of boys, which has traditionally been located on the street, girls' activities like listening to music and "just talking" with friends have been understood as happening in the home. A number of researchers, however, are theorizing that at the current time this pattern is disintegrating. Kirsten Drotner, for example, has stated that: "boys interested in computers spend most of their free time in the home in front of their terminals while girls increasingly take possession of public space" (cited in Ganetz 1995:87).

There are a number of problems, I believe, with this reading of the gender component of the division between public and private space. If we are to accept that teenage girls are taking up more of the public space, the extent to which this is occurring, what factors are enabling this and what activities they are partaking in once out of the home need to be questioned. Similarly, if boys are moving into the private sphere, what are the activities that are motivating them to do so? I expect that the responses to these questions would indicate that, even if there are more boys in the home and more girls on the streets, the activities they are participating in and the degree to which they are monitored by parents, still reflect greater discrepancies between boys and girls than overlap or reversal, as Drotner suggests. As Hillevi Ganetz (1995) writes, "computer-interested boys do not stay home to work on relationships but

because of an interest in technology; girls do not control the street in an outgoing, aggressive way but utilize it as an arena for relationships in a mixed- or single-sex gang" (87). To say that because males are in the home more means that the spheres have shifted is to conflate the gendered nature of the activities with their actual physical location. A parallel declaration would be, having looked at the use of phones in offices, that the barrier between male and female tasks in the workplace has been dismantled. Thus, as was introduced earlier through the work of Sydie (1987), the emphasis should not be upon the task, but upon the power and prestige it is accorded.

Using a computer, for example, has become defined as a masculine engagement because its association with 'the future' confers power onto its users. This masculinity, according to Sherry Turkle (1995), is in turn reinforced by the language of control that surrounds computers, words such as "crashed", "killed" and "abort" (62), which hinder the development and recognition of computer skills as 'feminine'. Women, in turn, have become reluctant to use computers, something that Turkle argues is an active response: "Women use their rejection of computers ... to assert something about themselves as women: it is a way of saying that it is not appropriate to have a close relationship with a machine" (Turkle 1988, cited in Van Zoonen 1991: 22).

During several of the interviews that I conducted, the girls expressed a dislike of computers that was explained in terms very similar to Turkle's (1995): they did not like to communicate through computers because they preferred 'real contact' to interaction mediated by technology. Thus seeing a friend was usually the first choice followed by the phone, with email existing only as a distant third choice. This was most prominent with Lindsey who, in response to a question about email, stated:

> I don't that much, cause I don't really - see I'm someone who - I'd rather talk to someone in person, and if I can't talk to someone in person then I'd rather hear their voice than read something that they're typing, but then like emails completely convenient if someone's living like way somewhere else. But I don't really, I don't like email that much, I don't like - its like so easy to like spend so much time on it, that I don't - like the only time

> I use a computer is for projects or homework. I'm not one of those people who likes to search the web just to find something cool.
> ...
> *Do you think you'll use computers in your job?*
>
> I think so, cause like every profession nowadays does, like everything does. But I don't know, there's something about them that bugs me, I'm definitely not the norm.... (Lindsey, 17)

Lindsey's dislike of computers frames the technology as something that is inferior to direct interaction with people, a very traditionally female perspective on technology (Van Zoonen 1991). The more mediated the interaction, the less you can read the immediate physical reactions of the individual. As Jessica, who enjoyed computers said, you cannot give a real hug on the computer. The phone fits in as a middle ground, for it is conceptualized as being an object that enables connections to be made more easily, not something that creates pleasure in itself. What creates pleasure, in contrast, are interactions with people.

The types of pleasure that computers, particularly the Internet, present may in part explain girls' lesser enthusiasm. For boys the Internet provides a space for freedom and resistance, a space for game-playing and looking at pornography free of parental interaction. Neither of the activities, according to traditional expectations, holds great appeal for girls. Another activity, which would arguably have more appeal for girls are the chat rooms. Here one can carry on a traditionally female pastime of talking and communicating. But even chat rooms have increasingly become seen as a threat to girls as older men pose as cute young boys, using the girls' innocence to build trust and 'take advantage of them'. Through media, such as teenzines, this becomes a threat that the girls are made consciously aware of. A headline in YM (September 1999), for example, reads "My online boyfriend turned out to be a pervert!" (106). The article tells the story of a girl who met an adult man in his forties that posed as a teen boy online. This man, who became her boyfriend, was eventually arrested after sending the girl

nude photos of himself and making harassing phone calls to her home. The article concludes by giving girls tips on how to 'surf safely', such as,

> Treat the people you meet online as you would any stranger. 'The net may seem safe because you use it in the privacy of you home, but you need to remember you don't really know the other people you chat with. You just feel like you do'. (110)

The Internet, because it transgresses the boundaries between public and private, presents substantially different promises for its female users than for male users. For boys the computer offers convenience: they can stay home and still explore. But for girls, when the public enters the private it brings new risks, it renders the space they are kept within for their safety, unsafe.

I have drawn upon the Internet here in order to bring the reader's attention to the similarities in current expectations of technology to those of the past, namely the telephone. At their introduction both the telephone and the computer were hailed as being great equalizers. Simultaneously, however, an undercurrent suggested this freedom the technology offered might be 'harmful' to some individuals. As the Internet is seen to create the potential for girls to be taken advantage of, the telephone was seen as a hole in the barriers that society had set up to protect of the privacy of the late-Victorian woman. As one writer of the time stated "The doors may be barred and a rejected suitor kept out, but how is the telephone to be guarded?" (cited in Martin 1998:55). Similar questions are today asked of the Internet, how will we protect our daughters from these perverts online? How will we stop this flow of information? Thus, the radical changes to our opportunities and limitations that many researchers theorize about today, can be seen as much more of a reflection of a continued need to re-affirm the boundaries than any introduction of a new threat that might tear them down.

Indeed, what the repeated idealization of technologies as transformative highlights, is that the borders between public and private have never been fixed and impermeable. But, because of the hegemonic relations of power between the genders that these idealizations maintain, they have been supported and presented as natural. When we discuss new technologies as a threat to these boundaries, and to the people they protect, we conceptualize them as real. We turn discourse into truth. Through this 'truth' the computer comes to be seen as threatening to women, thus must remain a tool of men. In turn, that which is prestigious remains male.

The conceptualization that the distance between the spheres is diminishing, although not holding in terms of the power accorded the activities, may still apply if one reads statements, such as Drotner's, as referring to physical location. If girls are generally leery of computers, this may suggest that they are forced to look elsewhere for leisure, and if boys are at home and off the streets, it may be that they are turning to the public sphere to provide pleasure. This would, however, require the public realm to have lost its threatening nature that had kept girls from its promises. As McRobbie (1991) writes:

> For the street remains in some ways taboo for women (think of the unambiguous connotations of the term 'streetwalker'): 'morally dubious' women ... Few working-class girls can afford flats and so for them going out means either a date - an escort and a place to go - or else a disco, dance hall or pub. Younger girls tend to stay indoors or to congregate in youth clubs. (30)

Notably this account of girls' interaction with the public sphere relies to a large extent upon generalizations and media images, as McRobbie herself acknowledges. But it is this very type of image from which girls (and their parents) develop their ideas of what threats the street holds and what is proper behavior for a 'nice' girl. If the spheres are blurring today then there must have been a radical shift from the early 1980s when the above was penned.

Girls' Freedom and the Public Sphere

During the interviews there were a few questions asked of each participant that did not directly relate to the phone or cell phone. One of these was what things they thought might be different if they were a boy rather than a girl. The most frequent answer, which came instantly after asking the question, was that they would be able to go out more.[7]

> Yeah, cause I think guys go out more than girls do. So there's more - like parents give them more responsibility, cause guys they - I don't know how to say it - but guys go out more, I guess than girls do. Lots of guys are like never home. Most of the time if you call a guy they won't be home, but if you call a girl they will be. (Laura, 14)

> Your parent's would probably like in a way trust you more or they're like not so worried when you go out. Cause that's how it is with my guy friends, cause they're guys so they're tough so they can stick up for themselves or whatever. But we're girls so "oh, no!" we're helpless, we can't do anything. I don't know. That's how it is with some parents - they're just like whatever. I'd probably be allowed to do more things - like when I was younger. Like now I'm probably the same as any guy. My parent's trust me like - they don't care what I do really unless I do something screwed up then I'm just screwed. But now I'm probably no different from a guy. I don't think so. (Christina, 16)

There was, throughout their answers, the general belief stemming from their observations of male friends and brothers, that boys were able to and did go out more often. These differences, while something that the girls wished did not exist, were in large part accepted. Being a boy meant being given more responsibility by your parents. It meant that the worries that constrained you as a girl, worries that generally originated from one's gender, would not exist or could be fought against if you were a boy. But the belief that girls are in need of protection is, in Christina's words, based on misconceptions of girls as weak and defenseless. Indeed she frames her own situation as "no different from a boy". This equal freedom, however, had to be earned by

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[7] These responses were particularly prominent with the younger girls and the girls who did not drive. For the older girls who did have access to cars, the perception of the difference between their activities and those of boys' was much narrower.

Christina through gaining her parents' trust. For boys it is a natural and normal freedom.

This belief that one was being treated like a boy was not, however, something that many of the girls felt. Indeed, for the majority of the girls I spoke with the freedom to go out as they wished was something they did not have, but would readily take up if the possibility was presented. For example, Roshni stated:

> I think though that I'd be allowed to go out a lot more if I was a guy.
>
> *Do you think you'd want to?*
>
> I'd take advantage of it if I could. (Roshni, 16)

But they were kept at home, because of their parents' worries. These worries were never questioned, nor was it questioned why boys were not 'worried over', it was just accepted in such a way that the worry came to be read as proof that their parents cared for them. The time spent at home, particularly on schoolnights, although rarely seen in a positive light, was accepted as something they "had" to do. And because of this time at home, which interrupted the social relationships that were of crucial importance, they turned to the telephone. Jessica, for example stated: "On schoolnights we can't go out, right? So the only way to talk is on the phone" (Jessica, 17). For these girls the phone becomes *the* method of socializing on those nights when one cannot go out. It is the phone that takes the place of face-to-face interaction for these girls who have little other option than to stay home.

Victoria, in response to what she does on schoolnights, frames the phone as crucial to "keeping in touch":

> I'm usually working or doing homework. That's why I use the phone a lot cause I can talk on the phone instead of having, well not having, but I can talk to people, keep in touch with people, without always having to get together with them.
>
> *So if you had the choice of seeing someone in person or talking to them on the phone ...*

> It all depends. Cause it depends - talking on the phone's so simple. Its like so simple. But seeing someone in person is kind of fun too. But you run out of things to do too. You can only go to this many movies, rent this many movies, sit and do nothing, sit and watch t.v., you know? You can go to parties, but I would, maybe talk on the phone actually. (Victoria, 15)

This time spent talking on the phone, as Victoria exemplifies, is not always negatively perceived, indeed at times it is preferable to going out. Victoria's words, by my reading, suggest two important ideas about the relationship of the phone to the domestic sphere. First, her words imply that there is something "easier" about staying at home than going out. At home you are not a worry, nor do you have to worry. There is a sense of simplicity and ease to being in the domestic sphere, a simplicity that arises from acceptance that this is the space where you are safe and where you belong. By preferring this space at the age of fifteen, the girl is learning an acceptance of this space, a happiness within it, which will be crucial to her adult domestic, helping roles. Secondly, there is something that the telephone enables that being in the public world does not - a sense of intimacy and a space for self-expression. The phone provides a "private zone" in the lives of girls' whose actions are highly monitored, both by parents and peers.

Culture of the Bedroom

McRobbie and Garber (1976), in describing where and what girls' cultures were if not the public subcultures studied by male researchers, coined the term "the culture of the bedroom". This culture, which emerged due to the greater restrictions placed upon girls, involves leisure centered around consumption of teenzines and pop music, and talking with (girl)friends about boys and fashion.[8] They state:

[8] Notably the girls which they are speaking of are young pre-teen girls, but the concept and the threats are ones that extend well into the late teen years and, from my interviews, is only altered through the ability to drive or moving away from home.

> Because they are deemed to be more at risk on the streets from attack, assault, or even abduction, parents tend to be more protective of their daughters than they are of their sons (who, after all have to learn to defend themselves at some point, as men). Teenybopper culture takes these restrictions into account. Participation is not reliant on being able to spend time outside the home on the streets. Instead teenybopper styles can quite easily be accommodated into school-time or leisure-time spent in the home. (12)

The center of girls' leisure time, because of the restrictions they face, becomes the bedroom in which time is spent both with friends and alone. This is the one space where a girl can have (to varying degrees) freedom from her parents' demands.[9] Myrna Kostash (1987), in her ethnographic study of teenage girls, relates the importance of the bedroom to the life of a teen girl, stating:

> A girl's leisure starts here, within the walls of her own bedroom. If she has a telephone extension, this is where she'll talk to her friends, at great length, and, if they visit, where she'll invite them to sit (lie or flop) and drink diet pop and listen to the tape she just bought, and give counsel regarding a certain pair of pants and a pair of boots. Here is where she composes poems in the journal she secretes beneath the mattress, and writes letters ... And, all by herself, with her pitiless eye, she examines herself... (260)

The bedroom is a protected space where, as Ganetz (1995) writes, "girls can be serious, giggly, childish and adult - without adults' supervision and control" (88). It is here that girls can experiment with identity, either alone or with friends. It is a place where they can try on images of who they wish to be and play with them before having to move the presentation to the public world where they are subject to the gaze of peers, parents, boys and teachers.

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[9] There are certainly problems with the idea of a bedroom culture, as Vivienne Griffiths (1995) reported from her ethnographic work on girls' and their friendships. To say that the culture of girls' is in the bedroom can be misleading, because this time is often spent there due to a lack of alternatives. Also the meaning and form of staying home varied greatly across groups of friends and age (137). Finally, it requires that the bedroom is a private space, not shared by other siblings, which limits its potential to girls of certain class backgrounds.

The telephone is related to the culture of the bedroom in two crucial ways: first the bedroom is the space from which the majority of calls are made and received; second both telephone and bedroom enable the creation of a private space where parents are kept 'outside'. To have a phone in your own room then becomes the ideal for it creates an even greater degree of privacy for talking than can be found in any other part of the home.

That having a phone in one's room is desirable is reflected in the advertising images of each decade analyzed, although who is shown as benefiting from this privacy shifted. In the early images having a phone in your room was framed as a benefit because it meant that the girl would not be bothering the family. It was being a "good" girl and giving the family, particularly father, his privacy rather than creating your own aural space and freedom, that was emphasized. In a Bell Telephones ad from November 1960, for example, courtesy is used to sell the "Princess Phone" (Image 22). Here a girl is imaged sitting by her bed, the phone receiver in one hand and a flower in the other. The text reads:

> "Come over and see my new Princess phone. Dad and Mother gave me one for my birthday. It's right here in my room. Daddy says he got tired of my talking while he was trying to read or watch TV. It's so little and light you can almost lift it with a finger. And it has a light-up dial. And it's pink!" What fun to have a Princess phone!... You'll love it for its beauty and convenience. And you can make points with your family by using it thoughtfully and sensibly.

As much fun as the phone is, as pretty and delicate it is, the benefactor of this gift is not the girl, but Daddy. Through the phone, which is loved for its femininity, you can behave as a perfect daughter - quiet and courteous. The qualities of the phone that are focused upon in selling to girls are its physical attributes, its beauty, its delicacy, not its functions or features. By placing it in one hand and the flower in the other, we are guided to transfer the meaning of one to the other. The flower signifies that which is pretty,

delicate and feminine, meanings that are then transferred to the phone, and in turn reinforced by the text. As the phone takes on these feminine meanings, the technological invasion of the girls' room that it signifies is diminished.[10]

The bedroom, however, is not only a site of individual activity. It is also central to girls socializing with friends. As mentioned earlier, very few ads from the 1970s used the phone as a prop because of the activity-oriented nature of the magazines at that time. There are a few exceptions to this, however, such as an advertisement in October 1975 for Pursettes tampons (Image 23). Unlike the images of the phone and domesticity from other decades, this image rejects isolation in favor of a collective group. Here the reader is presented with a cartoon-type sketch of a bedroom scene where a group of girls are having a sleep-over and discussing (through bubble captions) a swimming party the next day. In response to whether she is going to the party one girl says, "I was - but now I've got my period, and I can't use tampons. I've tried." The others go on to tell her of a new, easier-to-use brand. The space constructed by the image is feminine, as it is oriented towards communication and the sharing of knowledge about their bodies. As we read through the image we see the phone ring and one of the girls announces "Hey, the phone. Get out your bikini, Janie, and say yes." Boys have entered into the space, but they remain at a distance. They may be the topic of conversation, they may be the idols hanging from the walls, but it is a girls' culture of sharing and communication that holds the individual girls to this space. The phone represents the outside world, the boys. The ease of their intrusion makes the tenuous nature of the girls' collective and private space clear: it is a rare space that they are able to carve out for themselves, one which reflects the brief window of time where

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[10] It is in a very similar manner that the cellular telephone is sold to girls today: by its size, its colors, its prettiness. I will expand upon this in the next chapter.

girls will be the focus. It is this time and space of togetherness that can be seen as the "flowering of girlhood" McRobbie discusses, where girls are free from parents, but not yet under the demands of husbands and families. Both sets of demands, however, are shown to be near as parents are represented by the walls of the home and husbands by the compelling ring of the phone.

Today the telephone is a staple of the bedroom, as an accessory to every girl's room - at least as it is represented in teenzines. In teen magazines, segments on decorating one's room have been featured for a long time, with the emphasis currently being on readers' rooms that reflect their creativity and individuality. The magazines, for example, develop contests in which girls can compete on the basis of their designing prowess. *YM* magazine, in September 1999, ran a contest entitled "Let us into your room" (Image 24). The requirements for winning were 1) that the girl did the decorating herself and 2) that it "should be unique, imaginative and expressive of your personality" (69). In the magazines the bedroom is focussed upon, because it is the space that a girl has control over; it is the space where they have complete 'freedom' - at least in so far as they can express themselves through decorating. Hence what is important about the space is a traditionally feminine skill: beautification. Angela McRobbie (1991) pointed to similar trends in her study of *Jackie* magazine stating that: "Beautification and self-improvement, then, form the ideal hobby for girls ... beauty-work assumes that its subjects are house bound and hence foreshadows yet again the future isolated image of the housewife" (123-124). Decoration, it should be noted, may be a form of creativity, but it is a much less socially valued form of creativity than that which boys are encouraged to undertake on computers or cars. It is viewed as a creativity of consumption and the surface, rather than of production and the structural. That decorating does not create 'real change' is reflected in the image included with the

contest details, of a girl lying on the floor with her feet upon a chair. She holds a telephone in one hand and a magic eight-ball in the other. Through these two objects the lack of any 'real' freedom in the girl's life is highlighted. It is outside forces (either parental or transcendental) that are making choices, while the girl remains tied to the safety of her room with only a phone line to link her beyond its walls.

That the bedroom is central to the time girls spend at home resonated in my interviews. Although they did not speak of spending time in their rooms with friends, they frequently mentioned using the space for the privacy it afforded them from the family.

> Just cause its quiet - yeah, cause the family room is like a high traffic area, so yeah my room is quiet so it's good. (Kayla, 17)

Yet, even more than just seclusion, what the bedroom offers girls is the opportunity to be themselves and express their own identity. Katherine, for example, in response to where she spends most of her time states:

> In my room definitely.
>
> *How come?*
>
> Cause its like your personal space kind of thing. Like my room I decorated in my style. Not like the rest of the house like my mom designed it. It's my personal space and I can do whatever I want in it, and I feel most comfortable in it too. I can always close the door and have a little bit of peace and quiet and stuff, and I have the phone in my room too, and I can talk too, and listen to music. (Katherine, 17)

The bedroom is somewhere that the girl can be herself, free of her parents' gaze while developing her feminine talents of decorating and beautifying. All of the limits that being in one's room imposes, are turned into positives. Going to one's room is no longer the punishment that it would have been only a few short years before, it is time to be alone, free from any outside demands that you do not choose to let enter. At the same time, however, that it is this highly restricted and isolated space, which used to be an avoided prison, that has become the ideal space is very telling about what it means to be a teen

girl. In a life of external pressures, it is the space of isolation that becomes the space of freedom.

Phone as 'Zone of Privacy'

The phone can be seen as another 'space' of privacy, although aural this time rather than physical. Through its form of ear to ear transmission, the phone allows for a great degree of intimacy. This intimacy was central to women's early attraction to the telephone for it provided them with something they had not previously experienced – the opportunity to share feelings and emotions free from the eye of chaperones and husbands (Marvin 1998:60). Today the telephone, particularly the cordless phone, provides girls the potential to move outside the bedroom, yet retain some privacy. The majority of the girls with whom I spoke said that the phone they used at home was cordless.[11] Using the cordless phone, girls could roam through the house, moving in and out of family and private spaces. As Victoria states:

> Sometimes I'll just wander around whatever, see what's going on, just like talk and everything. But if I'm talking to Jordan - Jordan and I are sort of dating - if our conversation's really dumb, not really making me nervous, but just not as comfortable as a normal conversation, I'll walk around, not pacing, but I'll always be moving around. Or I'll just sit down, watch t.v. or sit down do whatever. (Victoria, 15)

Thus, the cordless phone adds a new dynamic to the private space that the phone creates. No longer is the girl tied to the family phone in the middle of everything, or to the phone in her isolated bedroom. Rather with a cordless phone she can alternately participate in, or avoid, the activities of the household. Yet, regardless of where she are

[11] The majority of the girls also had their own phone lines, or phone lines that were just used by the kids in the family. Thus, the amount of privacy that they had on the phone was increased over the family line where parents could pick up and listen into the conversation.

located physically, she has created a degree of privacy, for even surrounded by the family no one can intervene or interrupt the space of conversation.[12]

The cordless phone, which is used throughout the home, draws attention to how one can understand the phone as creating a private zone in a public space. This conceptualization originates in the research of educators which found that "girls in the public environment of the classroom create private, intimate zones by forming, together with a friend, an outwardly closed and inwardly relating dyad" (Ganetz 1995: 85). Ganetz (1995), in turn, applies this idea to the fitting room of a department store where she argues the relationship between friends is given free rein. The fitting room becomes for girls a "relating space" (86) where they can experiment with a variety of images and identities, and share feelings and opinions. It is also a space free from the power of parents, schools, and media (87).

Teenage girls, I believe, use the telephone in a very similar manner. Unlike the fitting room, the telephone is located within the private sphere of the home, yet it must be acknowledged that the ability to create privacy within this sphere is curtailed for many girls. Parents refuse to have shut doors, bedrooms are shared, and frequently the girl is here alone without her friends. Using the phone, the girls can create what Ganetz calls a private zone through which friendships can be conducted. The telephone, like the fitting room, sets up a space of confidence and of sharing, while simultaneously working as a free space, protected from the outside and from interruption. Both the phone and the fitting room, however, have the potential to monitor behavior – the fitting room through hidden cameras, the phone through eavesdropping parents. Yet, in both cases these potentials are downplayed in maintaining of the space as a private zone. What

[12] There are of course problems with this, namely that someone picks up the other line, or that another call comes through, but in both cases the interception is one that is easily detected by the individual conversing.

the phone, like the fitting room, therefore creates is both a relating space and a free space.

As a relating space, the telephone gives the girls a space in which to discuss their thoughts without intervention or self-monitoring. Because of the privacy it affords girls what is said on the phone can be more meaningful than the superficial chat and flirtation that occurs in the public world of school. Thus, the eternal parental question "what can you have to say, you spent all day with that person" can be answered. Lana Rakow (1986) has argued that this private "girltalk" is the precursor to the intimate "womantalk" of adulthood. She writes:

> Teenage women have already developed the need for intimate and private talk with other women, a need that cannot be met in the public context of school or in larger groups. One woman now in her early 20's explained ... 'It was too hard to get to talk to each other privately at school. There were always people around knowing you were talking and wanting to know what about' ... The content of both types of talk are about the private sphere of domestic life and relationships. Women themselves are aware that this constitutes a particular kind of gender-specific talk. (145-146)

The girls whom I interviewed confirmed this interpretation that what the telephone provided was a sense of privacy. It was on the phone that they talked about relationships and feelings - the topics that are expected to be the staples of feminine talk.

> *Is there any stuff you're more likely to talk about on the phone than in person?*
>
> Guys.
>
> *How come?*
>
> Because its easier to talk when its just the two of us than if we're in a public place we can't be like 'oh, guess what' all the good stuff that happened. Whereas on the phone its just us two. (Vivian, 17)

On the phone there is no one listening in, no one whom you may offend or hurt. According to these girls, this privacy that they gain when using the phone enables them

to be more themselves. It creates a safe space where they can explore the thoughts and feelings they are unsure of without having to face immediate reactions.

> I don't know, if I'm on the phone with someone I can feel more comfortable saying something that would be like embarrassing or something or they could take it the wrong way than being in person and getting all embarrassed or something like that. (Victoria, 15)

On the phone, through the combination of intimacy and distance it provides, the girls feel they can be more themselves. This requirement of distance to achieve openness, however, is interesting for it points to the extent to which their actions, in the public world of school and friends, are guarded. There they must present an image, a front stage persona, and rely upon it being accepted in order to gain approval. On the phone, conversing with close friends, bodies flung across their beds, hair unstyled, they can be themselves. They can have a sense of being backstage with no need to perform.

The distance that the phone creates, however, is not always viewed in a positive light. For many of the girls 'doing things' over the phone was viewed as inferior to doing them in person, at times even inappropriate. The use of the phone was, according to the girls, good for sharing thoughts between friends, but the 'really important' things, if done on the phone, were made impersonal. This was clearly related by Kirsten:

> Um, usually you talk about like things that happened to you that kind of upset you that you didn't want to say at the time. Like during school if one of your teachers did something at the time you'll just be sitting there and like 'oh that makes me so mad'. But when you're at home and you're on the phone you're just like 'I couldn't believe it when this happened.' I get lots of anger out on the phone sometimes, cause you can just say it and when you've said it its like over with and you feel better about it. I guess I could do the same thing in person, but it just usually ends up happening over the phone. And I think a lot of people just kind of use the phone like - I don't know- like sometimes, like lots of times people break up over the phone and I think that's kind of weird. Cause I don't understand why you wouldn't just do it in person, but people just feel safer doing it on the phone. Like people just feel like it won't be so bad if they don't see me and just say it. Like that's lots of peoples rationale. I think I'd rather do things in person most of the time. (Kirsten, 17)

Kirsten's words show an interesting division in what the phone should and should not be used for. In the public, male domain of school where girls are subordinated to the power of teachers, the expression of feelings is deemed inappropriate. In contrast, when girls

are at home on the telephone they have the opportunity to subvert the power relations that impact their lives because of the private zone the phone creates. The phone is the world behind the scenes; it is a relaxed, private, intimate space where there is no fear of reprisal. Thus, it stands in contrast to the front stage of school where image and behavior must be controlled.

Or, as Simone de Beauvoir writes:

> What gives value to such relations among women is the truthfulness they imply. Confronting man, woman is always play-acting ... These histrionics require a constant tension; when with her husband, or with her lover, every woman is more or less conscious of the thought: 'I am not being myself'; the male world is harsh, sharp-edged, its voices are too resounding, the lights too crude, the contacts rough. With other women, a woman is behind the scenes; she is polishing her equipment, but not in battle; she is getting costume together, preparing her make-up, laying out her tactics; she is lingering in dressing-gown and slippers in the wings before making her entrance on the stage; she likes this warm, easy relaxed atmosphere. (de Beauvoir 1949; cited in Gantz 1995: 86)

Kirsten, by stating that breaking-up on the phone is not appropriate, can be seen through de Beauvoir's words as suggesting that this is an act that should take place on the public stage. If this interaction between the genders of breaking up were to happen back-stage, on the phone, the comfort and safety of this private, intimate space would be destroyed. The space in which she can be herself, in which she can relax, is distorted for she has not had the opportunity to take up her armor, to construct herself, to guard her image. Rather she is taken by surprise and forced under the harsh lights of male interaction where she is liable to show her 'real' self. The telephone breakup, therefore, is despised for its uncaring impersonality because it is an invasion by the masculine world of controlled distance into the feminine world of feelings and intimacy. It is rejection without care, a surprise attack on neutral territory.

Undressing and the Back Stage

It is the relationship of the phone to the backstage, both through its location and the intimacy it creates, that has led to the contentiousness of the technology as it connects to the frontstage. At the introduction of the telephone in the late 19th century, for example, users found it hard to believe the telephone could really separate body from voice. The manner in which rules of propriety for face-to-face interaction were initially applied to telephone conversations suggests that users somehow believed they could be 'seen' by the person on the other end of the line. In turn, it was feared that the sense of privacy the telephone created would encourage girls to behave in an unacceptably bold manner. An elderly woman, for example, was "'appall[ed] ... to see how they use the telephones nowadays.' She was referring to her niece and her male friend talking on the phone while her niece was only partially dressed: 'The two of them stood talking to one another just as if they were entirely dressed and had stopped for a little chat on the street!'" (Marvin 1998:71). What the telephone created for women was a sense of both intimacy and safety, they were able to talk without having to control their outward image. For women the telephone created a space where they could be both behind and on stage simultaneously. They could communicate without having to spend the time and effort on their image 'required' for face-to-face interaction. Through the distance the phone created they were safe from harm and thus could flirt and play without consequence.

What is surprising, however, is the similarity between the thoughts of the elderly woman above and the ideas of girls today. No longer can there be any confusion for the users as to the nature of the technology and what is being transferred over telephone wires, yet the girls still resist the idea of being undressed while on the phone. They still resist this interaction of the backstage and the frontstage. What this suggests is not

that they believe they are actually being seen by the party on the other end of the phone, but that they have internalized the monitoring gaze to such an extent that they are a constantly aware of their image.

The extent of this self-monitoring is reflected in the girls' reaction to an advertisement for Steve Madden (Image 6) discussed in the last chapter. The ad, which presented a computer-altered girl talking on a rotary princess phone in a pristine bedroom setting, juxtaposed a 1950s cute girlishness with a 1990s hipness. During the interviews this image was shown to each girl, along with a series of other ads. Surprisingly it was this image that brought out the strongest reactions, as the girls rejected two aspects of the image: its use of computer manipulation and the 'reality' it presented.

For several of the girls, their first reaction to the ad was fear and aversion because of its use of computer animation. As Kayla, for example, states:

> See that just mostly frightens me with the big eyes and scariness, I really don't like computer animated things. They scare me [laughs] like when they're all weird like that - it scares me. (Kayla, 17)

This fear that Kayla reports can be seen as a reaction to the threat of invasion by masculine technology into the lives of girls as represented by the girl's distorted body. That this body is distorted in the one space that should be safe makes the threat even more conspicuous, for it suggests that no space is sacred from the distortions and misrepresentations of technology. Kayla's resistance to the model's shape-shifting may also, to some extent, point to her own fears of having to alter her body in order to meet the increasingly distorted ideals of femininity.

The second trend in their responses to the ad was that the image showed something that they would *not* do. In reflecting upon the interviews, I was struck by how

frequently they stated that the image was not realistic, even when asked to look beyond the animation. Talking on the phone half-dressed was something they would not do:

> I'm like okay, what is this? I wouldn't do that, I wouldn't be on the phone in that time that I'm getting ready, I'd never be on the phone. (Stephanie, 16)

Rather than a realistic image of their phone use, the girls stated that the image was a stereotype. They argued that it relied upon a popular idea that girls spend all of their time on the phone, which was not true - at least not for them.

> Hmm, obviously a stereotype.
>
> *Yeah, what's the stereotype?*
>
> A girl is trying to get ready and she's not even dressed but she's already talking on the phone. Like the phone call couldn't wait. And it's obviously supposed to be like some major thing, but it's probably not. And she has the little girlie slippers.
>
> *So is it realistic at all?*
>
> I don't think so. No, not really, maybe once in a blue moon, but its not like an everyday thing. (Vivian, 17)
>
> I've seen this one before in magazines. She's obviously very addicted to talking on the telephone - standing in her underwear running for it. (Jessica, 17)

Their negative reactions to the image point to three issues. The first is the idea of phone use as an addiction and a stereotype. The phone, the girls argue, is presented as something that they cannot resist or are tied to, which is not true. In their minds, what this image creates is an unfair stereotype of what being a teen girl is like, which trivializes their experiences. It is an image that presents girls as shallow, as only caring about popularity and image, something they deny is true, at least for themselves. [13]

The second point is closely related and stems from questioning the logical assumptions of their statements: why does answering the phone in your underwear

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[13] One common theme was a belief that, although they did not fit into these stereotypes, that there were other, more impressionable girls who did and who were being unfairly taken advantage of by this advertising.

mean that you are addicted to it? What is it about answering the phone undressed that conveys such negative images? If the model were answering the phone while watching t.v. or doing her homework it is doubtful that they would have responded that the girl was a stereotype, so what is it about being unclothed that makes this different? I would like to argue that their reactions stem from the belief that they are being watched. Although the girls realize the impossibility of this, unlike the fears of the elderly woman at the beginning of the century, what their readings of the ad suggest is the internalization of the masculine gaze. John Berger (1972), in his exploration of the nude in European painting, argues that women learn to constantly survey themselves, monitoring how they appear to males around them:

> To be born a woman has been to be born, within an allotted and confined space, into the keeping of men. The social presence of women has developed as a result of their ingenuity in living under such tutelage within such a limited space. But this has been at the cost of a woman's self being split into two. A woman must continually watch herself. She is almost continually accompanied by her own image of herself. Whilst she is walking across a room or whilst she is weeping at the death of her father, she can scarcely avoid envisaging herself walking or weeping. ... *men act* and *woman appear.* Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at. This determines not only most relations between men and women but also the relation of women to themselves. The surveyor of woman in herself is male: the surveyed female. Thus she turns herself into an object - and most particularly an object of vision: a sight. (46-47)

The girls' reactions to the Steve Madden ad suggest that they have internalized this gaze. Undressed, this 'model' is not complete. She is not the sight that she must be to be whole. Thus we become aware of the gap between physical privacy and aural privacy. For while the phone does create a sense of intimacy and a space in which one can be emotionally free, even resistant of surrounding power relations, the girl is never fully freed of the need to guard her physical state, both in terms of safety and appearance. She may be comfortable enough in her room to try on images, but in doing so she always imagines the male eye focussed upon her. Since this gaze has been

naturalized she can never fully step beyond it, no matter how secluded and isolated the space.

> It's just funny cause she's like all cartoon looking. I don't know, but the whole she's so tiny, like for some people it'd be like 'Oh, I'm supposed to look like that'. They're just funny to me. They're amusing - just like a cartoon. ...
>
> *Does it seem realistic at all?*
>
> A girl in curlers talking on the phone in her underwear?
>
> *Yeah.*
>
> Not for anybody I know [laughs]. Not really. Yeah it's kind of like a cartoon. I don't know anybody who does that, but if you do whatever, go ahead. (Christina, 16)

As Christina says, the image is like a cartoon - it shows us those things that are impossible. To be totally oneself, undressed and unconstructed, while talking to another is impossible for it requires that the girl shift from being the object of the gaze, the sight, to being the subject, the one that actively speaks out and determines. It requires that she overcome the internalized male gaze of surveillance.

Finally, this image highlights a paradoxical nature of the relationship between the telephone and advertising, by drawing our attention to the role of privacy. To use the phone is to engage in a private activity, between only oneself and the person on the other end of the line. To be imaged in an advertisement is inherently public. Thus, the imaging of a model on the telephone in an advertisement sets up an interesting contradiction. As the reader of the ad, we are clearly outside the image: we are voyeurs into the model's world. In this position the reader is given a taste of what it is to have the power to be the subject who gazes. Simultaneously the reader is reminded that she is potentially the subject of the male gaze at any moment. That she should forever monitor her image is naturalized by the girl in the ad who, with her attention withdrawn from the immediate scene, is blind to the reader's eyes upon her. As a reader, therefore, the image brings to your attention the knowledge that, even though you are

'unaware' of your surroundings while on the phone, these surroundings and the demands of proper femininity they encompass still exist.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I have focussed upon the division between the public and private spheres in two ways: first as that which renders girls' experiences of youth different from boys' and second as a central motivation for girls to take up the telephone. Through analyzing a series of advertisements using the telephone that appeared in teenzines over the past 40 years it was shown that, although the ideals of greater freedom and independence are more frequently presented over time, the underlying gender ideals have remained remarkably similar. From the 1960s to today, although there has been an increase in images of girls in the public sphere undertaking work activities, the qualities that are emphasized in work have remained fundamentally similar. It is being polite and courteous that is the key to success for women, according to the images. Even the occupations presented reinforce feminine ideals for they are positions of helping and assisting, not of using the telephone to undertake leadership roles. The presentation in magazines of the telephone is one that focuses upon it as fun and feminine. It is, however, important to remember that the goals presented are those of independence and individuality. Thus conflicting ideals are presented to the girl readers - they should both be successful, independent women, but still be helpful, communicative and concerned with appearance (both of themselves and their location). These contradictions are in turn played out in the girls' ideas, most clearly reflected in the words of the girl cited in *Newsday* who saw herself both as mother of four and thoracic surgeon.

Thus, the suggestion that the division between the spheres is dissolving, showed little resonance in either the ideals of advertising or the expressions of lived experience presented in the interviews. Although the focus was upon the phone, the descriptions given of going out by the girls reinforced that it was something that boys could and did do to a much greater extent than girls. Girls turn to the phone as a replacement, as a tool to allow them to overcome their isolation in the home. As McRobbie wrote, the culture of girls is a culture of the bedroom, where girls attempt to create a space of independence and freedom that does not exist for them on the street, in the public world, as it does for boys. Through the phone, they can create a private zone within the home, a space of relaxation and communication.

What the phone creates for girls, therefore, is an opportunity similar to that which the street provides for boys, but in a manner that reflects their gendered location. Through the phones the girls can create their own space, their own culture. On the phone they can, in part, resist the structures around them, they can criticize parents and teachers without fear of reprisal. But that they must use the phone, and that the phone forever connects them to the home, highlights the degree to which their freedom is limited compared to that of boys. It is her physical being that comes to dominate the girl's life, it is the need to keep her body safe and beautiful that restricts her to the home. What the phone provides is a second route to freedom, a route to the world of friends, which does not involve the body. For the body must be forever monitored, and watched, as the girls have internalized the power of the masculine gaze. A gaze that led to a strong rejection of the Steve Madden ad, for the ad both reinforced that you could be watched while suggesting the impossible, that you could be yourself unclothed. The importance of this monitoring gaze and of the limits placed upon girls will be the subject of the next chapter. For although, as these girls state, they cannot go out as much as

boys, there does appear to be a greater emphasis, particularly in idealizations of being a teenage girl, upon the ideal of freedom and a move away from domesticity today. As the cellular telephone is taken up in creating this "freedom" the ways in which the boundaries between private and public are supported through discourses of safety will be explored. The cellular phone will be questioned in terms of how it is used both to monitor by parents while simultaneously being a tool that the girls use to create independence and resist parental restrictions.

Chapter Four

Safety and Aural Surveillance

In this chapter, the relationship between the cellular phone and teenage girls will be explored through two conflicting social discourses: the parental discourse of danger and safety and the youth discourse of self-determination and freedom. Through the construction of the cellular phone's meaning, these discourses intersect, rendering the technology a site of struggle. By focusing this analysis on the intersection between these discourses I am drawing upon Foucault's definition of discourse as "ways of identifying truth and knowledge at historically specific moments, thus providing sets of rules that define realities" (Banerjee: 1995). Through the ability of discourses to create and sustain "social norms, practices, and institutions" (Banerjee: 1995) they are seen to contain power. The discursive field, however, is not understood as monopolized by a single predominant discourse; rather different subjects use a variety of discourses to some extent. Being a teenage girl at the current time, therefore, means that one is influenced by a number of discourses, which originate from the numerous locations that influence their social identity, such as family, youth and femininity.[1] By exploring how each of these discourses is played out through the cellular telephone, both in advertising and lived experience, some of the tensions between the demands and desires that teenage girls confront can be addressed.

Foucault's conceptualization of power will be of particular importance to this analysis. Unlike the traditional conception of power as emanating from a central source and affecting everything around it, such as a Marxist conception of base and superstructure, Foucault sees power in modern societies as "local, continuous,

[1] These listed are only a few of the discourses that impact upon teenage girls, others being those of race, class, and sexual orientation. Those listed, however, will be those that are focused upon.

productive, capillary, and exhaustive" (Fraser 1989:22). He states "when I think of the mechanics of power, I think of its capillary form of existence, of the extent to which power seeps into the very grain of individuals, reaches right into their bodies, permeates their gestures, their posture, what they say, how they learn to live and work with other people" (cited in Martin 1988:6). Power is seen not as imposed and top-down, but 'induced' in the body and produced in social interactions (Fraser 1989: 6). In the work of Foucault, society is therefore conceptualized as being composed of numerous hierarchies that, because power is not only top-down, are viewed as relations between subjects who all have some power. To have a relationship where one party had no power would mean a "non-relationship between a subject and a (no)thing" (Still 1994:152). Therefore, while power can be used to control and dominate, it can also "incite, exhort and create" (Still 1994:152).

In the eighteenth century there was, Foucault argued, a move from a system of power where people were managed by a royal leader using brutal and haphazard methods to bureaucratized systems of surveillance. It is through these bureaucratized systems, which Foucault termed "disciplining institutions", that those at the top of hierarchies assert control in the present day. Within these disciplining institutions, such as prisons, hospitals, and schools, he argues that power is gained through the acquisition of knowledge about the society's members via two new forms of visibility. The first of these is synoptic visibility, exemplified by Jeremy Bentham's panopticon prison design. The second is individualizing visibility, which is the development of the exhaustive study of the individual or the "case" (Fraser 1989: 23). Through these new "technologies" power has become less apparent and more pervasive, infiltrating to the consciousness of the individual and controlling their behavior.

The cellular telephone, as it is constructed by parents and in advertising, works to fulfill both forms of visibility. Parents' use of the cellular phone to monitor girls' behavior, it will be argued, renders the cell phone a tool of surveillance. The emphasis on identity and uniqueness found in advertising images for the cell phone create an individualizing visibility, a relationship that will be the focus of the next chapter. Following Foucault's theory these constructions are not seen as fully determined, for the girls, as subjects, do have some power for resistance and questioning. The forms of resistance the girls take up will, in turn, be analyzed in terms of how they are influenced by the discourses of rebellious youth and caring femininity.

It must be noted here, given the gender focused nature of the topic, that Foucault frames power in a manner that is very problematic for many feminists. Namely, he frames power as being gender-neutral. Where feminists have worked to show power as masculinist, with a central focus being the subjugation of women (and other groups that are marginalized), Foucault argues that not all power is repressive or dominating. Rather he frames power as productive - as producing knowledge not repression:

> In general terms, I would say that the interdiction, the refusal, the prohibition, far from being essential forms of power, are only its limits, power in its frustrated or extreme forms. The relations of power are, above all, productive. (Foucault cited in Ramazanoglu 1993: 21)

In turn this leads to an understanding where there can be no "true" gendered self, thus overcoming the issue of essentialism that was shown in chapter two to be a major shortcoming of ecofeminist perspectives. But concurrently it creates a situation where gender domination is removed from the "real"; a situation where the effects of subordination are seen only as discursive, not as lived.

> In arguing that Western societies have gone from "a symbolics of blood to an analytics of sexuality", he is too quick to give precedence to a generative mode of power. Although his analysis reminds feminists in contemporary society

> power is not monolithically held by men, feminists have demonstrated that the kind of power that Foucault associates with the sovereign's right of death ... remains vested in individual men and men as a group. (Diamond and Quinby 1988: xiv)

In order to use Foucault's conceptualization of power, but never lose the impact that hegemonic relations of inequality have upon subjects in society, I will continually forefront the impact that these hierarchical relations have on both the ideal and lived experience of being a teenage girl. Gender, as has been presented in previous chapters, will be conceptualized as a discourse that traditionally constructs males and females in opposition to one another, such that what is defined as "masculine" is also that which is defined as more important. But while accepting Foucault's conception of power and seeing these divisions not as induced by force but as constructed, it remains crucial to recognize the very real impact these discourses have had on the lived experiences of males and females. Recognition of this impact will, therefore, be carried throughout the following analysis of how girls' use of cellular phones is constructed through discourses of safety and independence.

Parental Discourse(s) of Fear and Safety

> The escape from parental supervision made possible by new communications technologies carried great risks. This was the bitter lesson learned by George W. McCutcheson of Brooklyn, the father of twenty-year-old Maggie, who found himself pleading not guilty in 1866 to "a charge of threatening to blow her brains out." When McCutcheson's newsstand business prospered and he decided to expand his operation, he set up a local telegraph station in a corner of his store, with his daughter as operator. He soon discovered that Maggie was "keeping up a flirtation" with a number of men on the wire, including one Frank Frisbie, an operator in the telegraph office of the Long Island Railroad. Maggie issued Frisbie a telegraphic invitation to call on her at home, which Frisbie accepted, also by wire. Maggie's father forbade the visit, and Maggie began to see Frisbie, a married man with a family in Pennsylvania, on the sly. Hoping to thwart his daughter's illicit suitor, Maggie's father moved his store to a different location. This sacrifice was futile. With her expert skills, Maggie easily found work at another telegraph station and resumed the relationship. Her frustrated father pursued her to another rendezvous and threatened her with bodily harm. She

> had him arrested on the spot. ... Equipped with the skills of independence, Maggie could outmaneuver her father and go where she pleased, however poor her judgement. In the end, the disruption of the family was complete. Father did not bring daughter to heel; daughter brought father to the authorities in full and disgraceful public view. (Marvin 1988: 74)

Maggie's use of the telegraph to assert her independence from her father's wishes exists as an early example of what is believed to be fundamental to being a youth: the desire for freedom and the ability to define one's future. This desire for independence is played out most clearly within the institution of the family, for it is here that trust and loyalty, control and freedom are negotiated in the construction or destruction of the young ego (Kostash 1987: 124). Whatever the impetus for the struggle (dating rules, curfew, use of the car) what is at the core of the conflict is the teen's ability to make their own choices and determine their own identity. From the time of Maggie's conflict with her father there has been an increase in the importance of self-assertion for teens, such that today in western culture independence is a central defining feature of what it is to be a young person. [2] This desire for freedom is reflected in the work of Reginald Bibby and Donald Posterski (1992). They reported, on the basis of the 1992 national youth survey they conducted[3], that what young people in Canada today most want out of life is freedom, with 86% of youth viewing it as very important (14).

For youth, being independent means that one is free of their parents and that they are able to make their own decisions about activities, friends, and spatial location. This has been a theme in advertisements since the 1970s, as was shown in the last

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[2] In stating that independence has increased as a desire for teens it should be noted that I do not mean to assert that this is necessarily true of lived experience, but it is clearly reflected in changes of the ideal. For example, the advertising images from the 1960s that were discussed in the last chapter all contained references to parents. Now, in contrast, parents are invisible in advertisements.

[3] The survey was funded by the Lilly Foundation.

chapter, but it is especially prevalent today, particularly in advertisements for the cellular phone. A recent advertisement for Telus relates this importance of independence and choice through an image of three girls in an urban setting (Image 25). The image is shown with text that draws the reader's attention to the importance of having this hip object of technology, "Think total opposite of fruitcake". Through the ads use of slang the readers attention is drawn to the urban hipness of the image and the challenge to parental values it presents. As they reject fruitcake they symbolically also reject the traditionalism of their parents. In this image, there are no constraints, no institutions that control them. In this space, and through their phones, they are constructing their own identities, which is reflected in their funky, individualistic style of dress.

Despite this ideal, the ability for girls to make these choices, as described in the last chapter, is curtailed by restrictions that locate girls more firmly than boys within the domestic sphere. Girls, for example, are rarely participants in the youth subcultures that arguably hold out the ultimate promise of freedom and resistance to parental control, because of the location of these subcultures in the public sphere. In the shaping of female culture by "family, peers, normative regulations, fear, violence and sexuality" (Van Roosmalen 1993:28), the public world is constructed as unsafe, thus restricting girls to the domestic sphere and the formation of "the culture of the bedroom". In examining girls' leisure it is therefore crucial, as Griffiths (1995) argues, that their patterns of recreation are not understood as based purely on individual choice and interest (131). Rather, as a number of feminist researchers (see Currie 1999; Griffiths 1995; Lees 1986; Kostash 1987) have proposed, we need to acknowledge the relations of control that keep girls out of the public sphere.

Griffiths (1995), in her ethnographic research into girls' friendships, highlights three main factors that restricted leisure in the lives of the girls that she studied. The

first were domestic responsibilities, such as washing up, cooking, cleaning and childcare, which the girls undertook much more frequently than their male counterparts. The second factor cited was the domination of youth clubs by boys.[4] The third, and most relevant to this work, were the parental fears about safety due to the "very real dangers to women from male violence and sexual harassment" (134). Griffiths states, for example, that although safety was to some degree assured by the girl being part of a group, this only applied during daylight hours. The one time that girls were frequently allowed to go out at night was when boys were present, or when they were with a boyfriend rather than a girlfriend (135). Sue Lees (1986) supports this by stating:

> This means that for boys their social life does not alter very much, whether they have a girlfriend or not - they are still welcome round the pub or can go on their own to a disco without the risk of being called a 'slag'. Without a boyfriend, a girl's social life is restricted. Many girls hesitate to go out on their own - even if they have parental approval - or even with a girlfriend, and their hesitation is based on real risks. The terms on which they participate in pub life are different, and to drop into a pub would be interpreted differently for a girl and for a boy. (76)

A further constraint that Griffiths relates is the perceived safety of transportation. As both buses and walking are deemed dangerous, the girls must rely upon parents to drive them, something that the parents may be unable or unwilling to do.

Due to these factors the opportunities for girls to go out, as was explored in the last chapter, are often much more limited than those of boys. This is not, however, to deny that girls go out or argue that they spend all of their time at home listening to music and helping mother, as Sue Lees (1986) fears the writing of McRobbie and Griffiths suggests. Rather it is to suggest that the parents fear for their daughter's safety, "realistically in view of the risks of girls being molested or raped [and therefore] are more

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[4] Of these factors it is only the third that directly applies to the girls whom I interviewed, thus it is described in more detail. This may in large part have to do with the middle-class background of the girls interviewed, in contrast to the working-class background of those involved in many of the studies. The differences may also relate to the location of the studies. The majority of the earlier research on girls has been done in Britain where youth clubs are a much more prominent feature.

concerned with how girls are to get home and who they are with" (Griffiths 1995: 70). Or at least the parents' perceive that these "real" dangers exist and thus use them to justify controlling their daughter's actions.

This emphasis upon safety is one that has seemingly grown in relative importance over time as a reflection of changes in society. No longer is the impetus to stay home motivated by the girls' acceptance of domestic duties, indeed in the interviews only one girl mentioned any time spent "helping around the house". In contrast to the images presented in the 1960s, such as the Bell telephone ads, girls today are not staying at home to take care of their cousins or to help mother. Yet at the same time, it appears that the importance of safety and the perception of danger that the public world holds have grown. Thus, the girls remain in the home for very gender specific (although shifting) reasons.

In declaring that girls are more controlled by concerns over safety today I do not mean to suggest that in the past parents were not concerned with the well-being of their daughters, nor that they had more freedom to stay out late or spend time with "undesirables". Indeed as the opening story of Maggie and her father reflects, in many ways girls had less freedom for self-determination in the past than they do today. Rather, I want to suggest that the seriousness of the threats the outside world presents and the belief that they are widespread and random has increased. No longer do fathers' fear that their daughters will tarnish their reputation by being involved with a married man, rather the threats have become date rape from a boy at school, or rohypnol in a drink at a party. Through the focus of attention in the media on gang violence and school killings, teenager boys are being constructed as the cause of danger (Rollins 1999: 313-314) and the threats that they pose to people's daughters (for the deviants are always other people's sons) are extreme and devastating. Thus it is

not only going out at night, or going out without a boyfriend that creates the potential for attack, it is leaving the home at all. But these concerns with safety, and the dangers that the street is seen to present, are invisible in advertising images. Indeed to present these threats would be to undo the world that advertising creates, it would be to insert reminders of the 'real' into the ideal. Thus, the public world that the advertisements portray is a world where there is nothing to fear.

In contrast to the advertised world where danger is invisible and freedom reigns, the impact that concerns about safety had upon the lived experiences of girls was frequently mentioned during the interviews.

> *Do you tell them where you're going to be?*
>
> Yeah always. If I'm going to spend the night somewhere they always have to check if the parents are going to be there - which they usually are. And they like to have the phone number in case they need to call me. ...
>
> *How come they want the parents to be there?*
>
> I think they just want to make sure its going to be safe. Make sure we aren't drinking or whatever. But usually when we are drinking there is a parent there. [laughs] (Jessica, 17)

That Jessica states she will be at a friend's house is not enough, for a stranger's house is still a space of potential danger. Once the girl is out of sight and touch they are inherently at risk and the only person seen as capable of protecting them is another parent. Yet, as Jessica's comments point out, the presence of a parent does not guarantee safety. What it does, however, give the parent (or guardian) is a sense of security, the belief that there is someone responsible present who will monitor their daughter and keep her best interests in mind, however faulty that belief may be.

The restrictions that the girls faced did however vary a great deal. Some of the factors that might be expected to create more freedom and fewer concerns about safety, such as age and the ability to drive, did not hold up when the girls interviewed

were compared.[5] One potentially significant factor which made a difference, and which Griffiths (1995) argued affected girls' ability to go out, was cultural background. In the explanations of what they were able to do given by the girls whose parents had immigrated to Canada, for example, their parents' cultural background was framed as having created more restrictions for them:

> They're pretty good about most things, but there are certain things that they're sticky about that I don't understand. It's just because they grew up in Greece in a little village and they had totally different values than we do here. (Vivian, 17)

Yet it is questionable just how much impact Vivian's parents' Greek background has upon the restrictions she faces, for in comparison to several of the other girls interviewed she had a relatively great amount of freedom. It seems, therefore, that the perception that one's cultural background will impact how much independence they are granted, may not always be an accurate reflection of lived experience. This is particularly true given the amounts of freedom that the media presents teens, who are disproportionately white, as having. That the girls would read the difference between these idealized images and their experiences as being an outcome of what separates them from the model - cultural background - is very understandable, but this does not make it 'factual'. For, while the ideal may be presented using girls who are white, it does not follow that the lived experience of white girls are necessarily any closer to the ideal.

The impacts of cultural background should not, however, be discounted. When, for example, I asked the girls if they knew of any people that had very strict rules about how they could use the phone, the girls who were mentioned were invariably described in terms of their ethnic background:

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[5] In making this statement I do not wish to declare this as true in any larger sense than the girls whom I spoke with, but it was a trend found in their experiences.

> Well like these two Lebanese girls that we know can barely talk to us on the phone just because they're so strict about having friends outside of the family. (Vivian, 17)

Thus, the restrictions and controls that parents placed upon their daughters, and the discourse(s) of safety and fear that created the impetus for their rules, should be seen as variable relative to the background of the parents, although to what extent does need to be questioned further.

According to the girls, all of their parents were, to varying degrees, deeply concerned about their safety in a world that was seen to present numerous threats. Indeed, it was this concern that was frequently cited by the girls as the motivation for their parents to buy them a cellular phone, an instrument that the girls often did not want or deem necessary.

> [The cell phone is] pretty much in my car the whole time.
>
> *Do you use it?*
>
> No, my mom just makes me take it cause I drive late at night. Like a lot of the time I don't get home until like 3am, and my mom's like "it's not good for a girl to be driving at night by herself, I don't feel comfortable, take the phone". I wouldn't but she makes me. I guess it's like a safety thing. (Christina, 16)

Stephanie's mother also wanted Stephanie to have a cellular phone, but like Christina, she was resistant to having one. Stephanie, in fact, refused to have the phone, although this was framed in terms of cost rather than as a rejection of her mother's wishes:

> My mom actually mentioned to get a cell cause I used to go out a lot and she told me to get one so she knows where I am cause sometimes I wouldn't call. She told me to get one but I don't know, I didn't want to. They're a waste of money, I think.

By turning the emphasis to the cost of the phone, she avoids appearing as though she is directly rejecting the parental gaze. Rather it appears that she is making a choice that would fit into traditional ideas of being responsible - she is saving money.

When I questioned Stephanie as to why her mother had wanted her to have the phone, the response she gave framed her mother's rationale in terms of safety and the ability to know her location.

> She just wanted - like now I'm working a lot so I don't go out anymore. But before I used to go out like all the time. Like I'd wake up and I'd go out and then I'd come home for supper and go out again and I'd go out all the time and my mom just wanted to know where I was cause I didn't call as much cause I didn't - like sometimes I couldn't get to a phone. Cause most people don't bring their cell phones out during the day, like after 7pm most people turn them on - and she just told me "you should get a cell phone so that I now where you are cause I get worried when you don't call" and stuff like that. And in case you're stranded somewhere cause she doesn't really trust my friends cause they just got their licenses, so she wants to know we're okay in the car and just in case something happens to the car. (Stephanie, 16)

Throughout the interviews, it was stated that what motivated the parents to buy cell phones for the girls was safety - a safety that required detailed knowledge of their activities. It was because of these concerns over safety that the girls carried the cellular phones with them, but the actual use they made of the phones was not constrained to emergencies or safety. Rather the cell phone was used for convenience and making plans with friends:

> Um, I always take it. She [mother] makes sure I always take it, even if I only go to like a store to pick something up, I always have to have it with me. It just makes her feel safer that she can always reach me and I can always call if something happens. So yeah I take it everywhere I go basically and every time she goes out she always has it and whoever goes has it and so yeah its like in constant use.
>
> *Is it just used for calls about safety?*
>
> I don't know, like for myself when I take it I always call my friends on it and waste her minutes, but you know I call like not for safety reasons, I call just like to talk. (Katherine, 17)
>
> *A lot of ads suggest that cell phones make you more safe and talk about security. Do you think that goes into anybody's -?*
>
> I think it might. For Vicki, she lives out in St. Albert and she takes the bus a lot to and from at night, so I guess it might be a little bit nicer to have it. And she works late sometimes too. ...
>
> *Would it be a reason that would motivate you to get one?*
>
> Um, probably not. It would probably go for parents mostly to get their kids one. (Jessica, 17)

That it was concerns over security which motivated the parents to buy the phones for their daughters reflects not only parental concern, but the extent to which these worries are based on gendered expectations of girls as being at risk, whereas boys need to "learn to take care of themselves". According to the girls, their main uses of the cellular phones, for convenience and making plans, are no different from those of boys. What is different is who purchased the technology and what expected use motivated the purchase.

> Only about 3 or 4 girls have them and all the rest are guys. The guys all buy them for themselves I think, and the girls, like me and my two other friends, our parents all bought them for us for our safety. The guys all have jobs and bought them for themselves and pay for them themselves. I don't know I never thought about that before.
>
> *Can you think of any reason why the guys would want to buy them for themselves?*
>
> I don't know, probably, I don't know - the girls - the parents buy them for the girls for the safety, but the girls use them just to like keep in touch and I think that's the same as why the guys have them is like to call each other to say like, "Yo, we're at this party, come" type thing. (Kirsten, 17)

The girls argued repeatedly that their parents bought the cell phones for them for safety reasons. The boys, in contrast, are believed to have bought the cell phones themselves for their own use. These reports closely reflect what Rakow and Navarro (1993) found in their study of women's ownership of cell phones: that cellular phones were bought for women by their husbands for the purpose of protection. Similarly, among the girls that I interviewed, their parents are buying the cell phones for their daughter's "safety". In both instances, the female is set up as being at risk and in need of protection. Indeed, only one boy who had a cellular phone for "safety" reasons was mentioned in all of the interviews:

> My one guy friend does cause he has to tell his mom where he is or whatever. We're on the north end and he like lives on the south end so, especially cause he has to take the bus home at night, like if we go out and he has to get home and he has to take the bus, so its like a safety thing again. (Christina, 16)

Although this boy did use the phone to call home, the extent of his use of the technology to maintain parental knowledge of his location and behavior, or for "safety reasons", in no way approached the extremity and invasiveness of the girls' parents demands. Thus, even if the use of the cell phone in some sense transgresses gender boundaries (they use the cell phones like boys do, for convenience), the reasons that the girls carry them are still strictly defined by gender expectations.

> And when I'm out, I have to call my mom every like 45 minutes, every half an hour, past a certain time, like past nine. I have to call her every half an hour to tell her where I am. ... When I'm out she doesn't always know where we're at, like whose house we're at or what we're doing so I always have to call. 'Cause I told her like, I don't always want you to call me, so I'm just gonna call you every half an hour, so she said it was okay so I gotta call. (Katherine, 17)

> My mom bought it for me. I think she bought it basically because she's always like, if I ever went out she's like "call me when you get there, call me if you're going somewhere else" and half the time I never called her. And so, now she always calls me. Like if I said I was going to be home at like 11 and if I'm not home at 11:30 then she'll be calling me "where are you". But she made the mistake of getting me call display so if I see that she's calling I usually just pretend that my phone was off. (Kirsten, 17)

For these girls, to a much greater degree than their male counterparts, the cellular phone becomes a technology of power for the parents. It is a tool by which the parents can monitor and control, while giving the girl a [false] sense of freedom.

Of the eleven girls that I interviewed only four did not have cellular phones that they took out with them on a regular basis. Each of the girls who did have a cellular phone had received it from her parents so that they would be able to keep in touch with her when she was out. According to the girls, what the cellular phone provided their parents was the ability to reach them at any time and to be assured that there could be no excuses not to call home. Thus, it created for the parents a feeling of security because they could, as Roshini stated, "keep track of you" through the knowledge, or at least the sense of knowledge, that the technology provided.

> I think now that we have a [cellular] phone my mom knows more of what I do, cause when we didn't have it I would only call, like one call per night just to tell her like, I'll be home around ten or eleven. And I never really told her what I'd be doing. Now like every half an

> hour she asks me what I'm doing, so she knows like detailed information about what I'm doing each night, you know? So she knows more. (Katherine, 17)

How much knowledge the parents were actually gaining or even felt they were gaining is unknown, and to some extent unimportant. For so long as the girls believe, as Katherine does, that the phone enables her parents to know more, then it is fulfilling what her parents' desire: control of Katherine's behavior. In essence, it is not important what knowledge the parents actually have of the daughter's activities. What is important is that the daughter believes her parents are able to have this knowledge, for then she will begin to self-monitor and mold her behavior to fit what she believes they would be happy to discover.

For the parents what this knowledge, or perceived knowledge, creates is a way for them to have some control over their daughter's actions and safety when she is in the public sphere. The extent to which the parents possession of this knowledge impacted the girls' lives was made clear when they were asked how things would be different if there were no phones and, therefore, no way to call home and let their parents know their location:

> Most likely, cause its like I'm going here but after that I don't know where I'm going. So it'd be like you'd go somewhere and then you'd have to come home tell them where you were going again. So it would just take up more time and then you can't do what you want to do and then you have to come home and whatever. Just not good. It'd be bad - it would be like 'kay this is stupid, I'll just stay home'. Pretty much end up having no life. (Christina, 16)

It was not whom they are with, nor what they are doing, that the girls were phoning home to pass on, but their location. Thus, in this discourse of safety, it is the location of the physical being that becomes paramount. [6] But why would this necessitate a cellular phone? One certainly can, as Stephanie describes, use a regular phone to call home:

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[6] This importance of the physical is particularly interesting when it is compared to the current rhetoric of technology as freeing us from our bodies and of our digital era dominated by information.

> Usually where you are you could just use a pay phone to call whoever you need to call. ... So I think a pay phone is good enough, or if you're at a friends house you can just use their phone. (Stephanie, 16)

What the cellular phone, however, presents that the regular phone does not is the ability of the parent to contact the child whenever they want. As Katherine describes above, with the regular phone excuses are easy to come by, but with the cellular phone there is theoretically no reason to be removed from the technology. Thus, through the reach of the cellular phone, parents have both the potential to gain more knowledge about their daughter's activities and the opportunity to always be present through an object that may ring at any moment. It is because of the knowledge that the cellular phone can provide and the sense it creates that one is always being watched that it works as a tool of surveillance. It is important, however, to reiterate that this use of the phone as a tracking device, as a tool for gaining knowledge and therefore control, is invisible in advertising images of the cellular phone. Indeed, any reference to parents and relations of control are removed from advertising images. Rather, as will be explored later in this chapter, the advertising images present a world of freedom and independence where the knowledge the phone provides is hidden. But although this potential for parental knowledge is invisible in the ads, it must be acknowledged by the girls in order to be effective. The girls must believe that the cell phone provides knowledge in order for it to impact their behavior and force them to act as they believe their parents' desire.

Michel Foucault's conceptualization of the panopticon as central to a new disciplining mode of power is particularly relevant to understanding the use of the cellular phone as a mode of surveillance. The panopticon, introduced by Jeremy Bentham in the nineteenth century, was a model for a prison that worked on the principle of creating visibility. Foucault (1996), in the essay *The Eye of Power* describes the principle of the panopticon:

> [O]n the periphery runs a building in the shape of a ring; in the center of the ring stands a tower pierced by large windows that face the inside wall of the ring; the outer building is divided into cells, each of which crosses the whole thickness of the building. These cells have two windows: one corresponding to the tower's windows, facing into the cell; the other, facing outside, thereby enabling light to traverse the entire cell. ... Owing to the back-lighting effect, one can make out the little captive silhouettes in the ring of cells. (1996: 227)

In the eyes of its creator, Bentham, the panopticon was a "revolutionary discovery" - it was a "technology of power capable of resolving the problems of surveillance" (Foucault 1996: 227) thus enabling an effective exercise of power. In the late eighteenth century there was, according to Foucault, a fear of dark places, such as dungeons, because they were seen to suggest the possibility of traitors and revolt. What the panopticon, in contrast, presented was a "power through transparency" (232) for it made all areas open to the observing gaze. As each individual comes to feel this observing gaze weighing upon them they begin to internalize it, thus becoming their own overseer: "everyone in this way exercises surveillance over and against himself" (233). It is this internalization that gives the observing gaze its power.

Importantly in Foucault's work, power is not conceptualized as held by one sovereign leader and being only prohibitive, but rather is seen as constitutive and diffuse (MacCannell & MacCannell 1993: 210). In modern society, he argues, power involves complex social arrangements that construct each individual through supervision, surveillance and review. These three are collectively considered by Foucault as "the gaze" (MacCannell & MacCannell 1993: 210). The panopticon is one of the new techniques of the gaze, along with schools, hospitals, psychoanalysis, social scientific survey methods, and medical records.

When girls carry cellular phones, the phones become part of this gaze, working as a tool of aural surveillance for their parents. As the girls carry their surrogate parent with them on every night out, as they call home every hour, every half-hour, they are

constantly reminded of their parents' presence and wishes. At any moment the phone may ring with mom or dad on the other end asking where you are, what you're doing, who you're with. As these questions are answered, the daughter not only relieves her parents because they know where she is; she relieves them by letting them know she is somewhere safe. If the location or crowd is not to the parents' liking, they have the power to demand that she come home, or to ground her from going out again. With the cellular phone, the demands of safety and the domestic sphere that constrain girls to the home are expanded into their time outside of the home. Thus, the private spreads into the public, which is already limited for girls.

In many ways the power relations between parent and child are more similar to the relations between sovereign and subject that existed prior to the eighteenth century, than they are to the current disciplinary power Foucault discusses. Parents do have the power of the patriarchal imperative: 'no!' Parents still have the ability to take up tactics of control that may seem brutal and haphazard. It is in part this contradiction between the form of power which parents invoke and that of the society in general, which leads to parental control being so highly resisted and frequently ineffective. For children, are also implicated in numerous other discourses which indirectly teach them that power is not fully determined nor is it only top-down.

> It should also be noted that these ensembles do not consist in a homogenization but rather in a complex interplay of support among the different mechanisms of power which nonetheless remain quite specific. Thus where children are concerned at the present time the interplay between the family, medicine, psychiatry, psychoanalysis, the school, and the judicial system does not homogenize these different agencies, but establishes connections, cross-references, complementarities and determinations that presuppose that each of them maintains, to a certain extent, its own modalities. (Foucault 1996: 236)

Between these different agencies, which work to control and define the place of youth, there are connections made, but also spaces that become apparent. As there is not a singular, determined experience of "childhood", but individual experiences created

through the intersections between institutions. Thus, the discourse of parents is recognized not as "truth", but as a truth that can be contested and resisted. Every subject, through the contradictions between discourses, therefore has an awareness of the potential for resistance.

For Foucault the conceptualization of resistance is crucial.

> Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power. (Foucault, cited in Sawicki 1988: 24)

In Foucault's conceptualization, all power produces resistance; hence, resistance is a part of all power. Resistance takes the form of counter discourses which "produce new knowledge, speak new truths, and so constitute new powers" (Ramazanoglu 1993: 23). It is because of this that wherever there is a relationship of power it is possible to modify its hold. For power, Foucault states, "is exercised only over free subjects and only insofar as they are free" (Sawicki 1988:25). The actions of free subjects are actions, therefore, that are not forced, only structured, for if they were forced the individual would no longer be a free subject, and the relationship would not be one of power. Thus, subjects always have some opportunity to for resistance.

The cellular phone enables the parent to have control over their child in a way that fits with the current mode of disciplinary power. Rather than a traditional authoritarian position of "because I said so", the cell phone allows parents the power of the disciplinary gaze. With a cell phone in hand the child is allowed out into the public world to make his/her own choices. These choices, however, are monitored through the cellular phone that acts as the parents "ear" into the world of their child, such that the child will, probably, choose what the parents want because she can be called upon at any moment. But, because the child now has the opportunity to make choices, the potential that they will be swayed by other discourses opens up greater spaces to the

possibility of resistance. Thus, in choosing a disciplinary mode of power, the child's resistance can never be fully contained by the parents. Rather, all that the parents can attempt to do is to make their discourse seem as legitimate and "true" as possible.[7]

The extent to which teenage girls have accepted that the world outside the home is dangerous, therefore, becomes a reflection of how well this parental power will "work". By accepting that the world is dangerous, as their parents tell them, they accept the legitimacy of their parents worry and concern. Once this worry is seen as justifiable, which is made even more likely given that thoughtfulness is central to femininity, they willingly call home at the requested intervals and tell their parents everything about their location and activities. If they are willing to make these calls, however, they must first self-regulate their behavior, such that they are not doing anything their parents may object to when they speak. The knowledge that they expect their parents to be able to have, because of the ability to call them on the cellular phone at any time, in turn, controls what choices they will make. But this knowledge, as they know, is not fully determined. Spaces remain for the girls to resist, for the cellular phone is only a tool of surveillance, its gaze is neither total nor complete. The cellular phone, as it is constructed at the intersection of discourses, can be taken up and used in a manner that is resistant to that for which their parents have purchased the technology: to call their friends and for convenience. They also use it to (slightly) mislead their parents.

Youthful Independence: A Discourse of Resistance?

In Foucault's theory there is a rejection of Enlightenment values, which call for revolutionary change in the creation of a society that recognizes a system of universal

[7] The move to this disciplinary power should not, however, be seen as one made out of free choice. Rather the parent is forced into this position as the child comes into contact with other discourses, for it becomes impossible to maintain that one's power represents truth and cannot be questioned, when the subject is aware of a variety of other discourses, such as those of youth.

values.[8] As John Rajchman writes, for Foucault "freedom does not basically lie in discovering or being able to determine who we are, but in rebelling against those ways in which we are already defined, categorized, and classified" (cited in Sawicki 1988: 27). Thus it is not for an inherent, true nature that we must search, as liberal perspectives have posited, but rather we need to argue against the discourses which define us if we want to avoid subjugation.

In many ways it is precisely this questioning of the discourses that define who we are that has become the trademark of youth cultures over the last half century. The discourse of youth, through which they attempt to assert themselves as individuals free of parental power, is a discourse of resistance to parental power. Thus, as the parents attempt to control and monitor their child's actions, through a discourse of safety and traditional duties, the teen attempts to assert their individual choice through a counter discourse of independence.

This resistance can be seen particularly clearly in the actions of youth belonging to performative subcultures, for example, punks. Within the punk subculture symbols of control and dominance, such as the swastika, were actively taken up and used to create shock and, theoretically, change. Dick Hebdige (1978) writes of the swastika in punk subculture: "The signifier (swastika) had been willfully detached from the concept (Nazism) it conventionally signified, and although it had been re-positioned within an alternative subcultural context, its primary value and appeal derived precisely from its

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[8] This is one of the aspects of Foucault's work that is most difficult for many feminists to accept. Nancy Harstock, for example, states that Foucault "represents a dangerous approach for any marginalized group to adopt" and asks "why is it that just at the moment when so many of us who have been silenced begin to demand the right to name ourselves, to act as subjects rather than objects of history, that just then the concept of subjecthood becomes problematic?" (cited in Brodribb 1993: 46). The conception of power that Foucault presents has also been problematic for many feminists because it is a gender-neutral power rather masculinist as feminists have argued. This issue will be returned to later in the chapter as the impact of gender discourse is questioned in relation to the cellular phone and girls.

lack of meaning: from its potential for deceit" (1978: 117). By sewing the swastika onto their clothing, the punks were hated by everyone. They were hated by those against racism, a group to which they belonged, for wearing a symbol that held such racist connotations. Simultaneously they were hated by skinheads and racists for mocking the symbol. In both cases those who hated them did so because of the meaning they were assigning to the symbol, a meaning that the punks were attempting to show was not inherent or unalterable. By showing the swastika as free from 'true' meaning, they were attempting to highlight the constructed nature of society.[9]

I have drawn upon this example of punks' use of the swastika in order to draw attention to the potential for resistance that arises from the appropriation and misuse of objects. While it is expected that resistance to the dominant order that parents represent will be a central feature of male youth cultures, the acceptability of resistance does not exist to nearly the same extent for girls. Yet, there is little to suggest that girls do not strive for the same goals of independence and freedom as boys. But, given the restrictions placed on girls access to attention seeking, public displays of resistance, the forms of resistance that girls do take up are necessarily more subtle. One of the forms of resistance frequently taken up by girls is the misuse of consumer goods.

When one looks to media images, such as those presented in teenzines today, one finds that a large number of them rely upon representations of independence. For example, a recent advertisement for the clothing line Dollhouse plays up the idea of freedom and independence by relying upon images of adventure (Image 26). The image presents four girls, two of whom are on cellular phones, another holds a water

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[9] The constructed nature of the meanings of signs is further highlighted through the example of the swastika given its meanings, prior to the Nazi's use, of "good luck".

pistol out. Superimposed against a backdrop of New York City with helicopters flying through the air, the advertisement draws upon the image of *Charlie's Angels.* In a playful manner, which corresponds to the name of the clothing line, four multiracial girls are presented as "spies". They are again shown in a smaller inset at the bottom, in an aggressive stance, the camera angle from below asserting the girls' power over the image. These girls, through their props and placement in the image are very independent - there are no parents, no boyfriends, holding them back and controlling them. They are out on the dangerous streets, seeking adventure and taking care of business. However, the image does not allow them full access to this public world of danger that the helicopters remind the reader are a part of the big city. Armed with water pistols and dressed in stiletto heels they have little option other than to play dress-up hero.

The cellular phone in the Dollhouse advertisement, and in numerous advertisements today, is used to symbolize mobility and being out and participating in the public world. This is seen again in an ad for StriDex Facewipes To Go, where both a cellular phone and a Discman are imaged as parallels to the facewipes (Image 27). Each of these new technologies is presented as providing something that is essential to being a teenage girl today: "conversation to go", "tunes to go", and "clear skin to go" respectively. Through the placement of these three consumer goods - the cellular phone, the Discman, and the facewipes - in parallel positions within the image the meanings that the first two, which are already familiar to the viewer, signify are attached to the new product. The facewipes, through the meanings transferred from the cell phone and Discman, are presented to the reader as mobile, "cool", and the outcome of modern technoscience. As a technological invention, the facewipes become part of the path to the future - a future free of breakouts. Through these three objects, a girl is free

to move into the public world, and never be afraid of being disconnected, unattractive, or dorky.

The desirability of freedom is presented again in an advertisement for Vodafone text messaging, in a manner that is both playful and slightly sexual. The main text 'Will U B Tied Up 2Nite?' is set against a purple background that matches the faceplate of the cellular phone shown in an inset at the bottom (Image 28). As in the StriDex ad, no people are included – only the technological objects and text describing how the products will improve your mobility and add to your convenience are imaged. The text continues, "sending text messages is the fast, fun way of staying in touch in secret and in silence" thus emphasizing the control that you, the reader, have over the messages sent that can no longer be overheard by parents or teachers. These text messages on the cell phone are presented as a new freedom, a new way to pass notes in class without the fear of being intercepted. Indeed, they are notes you can send regardless of time and location. Underlying this secrecy is a sense of sexual adventure - most clearly shown in the double meaning of "Will U B tied up 2Nite?' In one sense, the phrase focuses the reader's attention on being out and being free, in another it plays upon ideas of a deviant sexuality. Yet this freedom, both sexually and spatially, is tempered by a reference to family: "In short it's a great way to communicate with family and friends wherever they are".

References to family, unlike during the 1960s where they were present in the majority of images containing the telephone, are very uncommon in today's images of the cellular phone. In part this may be tied to the nature of the cellular phone which has been constructed, both through its physical mobility and through its associations with a discourse of a cyber-future, as increasing our ability to be free from traditional locational constraints of space. Unlike the stationary telephone that, as was explored in the last

chapter, is generally associated with feminine spaces such as the home or female defined activities such as answering phones, the cellular phone is imaged to suggest time in the public world. In contrast to the ways in which the public world is constructed by parents, in advertising it is presented as the realm of fun and adventure. The dangers of the public world are not present in the idealized world of advertising. Indeed if any reference to its threatening nature is made the 'real' dangers are removed and it becomes excitement oriented, as in the Dollhouse advertisement. In the ads, the cellular phone is not a tool that parents use to call their daughters, but a hip accessory, which keeps them connected to what is going on. What the phone will create, according to the majority of the advertisements, is fun.

From the presentation of the ideals of independence and fun one can read off the images the expectation that, at least advertisers, believe this is what teenage girls want. Currently, for example, one of the predominant focuses of marketing and advertising research is the "subjective" dimension of personal experience. This approach can be seen as involving "digging deep into the mind of the consumer in order to find a critical insight on which to build a powerful strategy" (Leiss et al. 1990:147). Central to this strategy is:

> Listening to consumers. Listening and listening. Not just to what they say, but to what they mean. Listening for the expressions of need, of dissatisfaction, uncovering attitudes and behavior patterns. The planner's job is to immerse him or herself in the world of the consumer until the point of view of the consumer permeates the planner's thinking, and leads to the discovery of a critical insight on which to build a powerful strategy. (Bruce 1987, cited in Leiss et al. 1990:147)

As Leiss, Kline and Jhally (1990) point out, this statement highlights the two fundamental purposes of all advertising research: "1) to understand how consumers experience the meaning of products and how they formulate the intention to purchase;

and 2) to construct persuasive communications strategies on the basis of that understanding that will reach the inner experiences of the persons" (147).

What the advertisements that are used to market the cellular phone to teenage girls present, therefore, is the conceptualization that what teenage girls desire is freedom and fun. The girls want to be the focus of the image, they want things that are cool and exciting, yet convenient and practical. Indeed, the images for cellular phones that the girls in the interviews reported liking most were those directed to teenage girls that presenting the phone as fun. An ad for Nokia, which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, received particularly positive responses for its imaging of the cellular phone as fun (Image 29). Here the cell phone is sold using a mock-up of a teenzine that includes horoscopes, a question and answer section and images of the phone as a fashion item. Thus the ad, as one of the girls stated, makes having a cell phone look like so much fun. Yet, although the girls were attracted to the images because they were fun, it was not for fun that they used the phones. Rather their descriptions of using the cell phone revolved around convenience. For example, when the girls were asked what they liked about having a cellular phone, or why they would like to have one, they responded in terms of how it would/did make their lives easier:

> So that people could get a hold of me, just to have I guess, so I could call people from wherever. Cause sometimes its a hassle, like if you go to Lion's park or something and you want to call someone and we don't have a cell phone we don't get a hold of them. (Jessica, 15)

> Yeah, because its so much easier to get a hold of people. I'm never home so I'm always like if anybody calls I have the cell phone. Its not like sitting there and chatting on the phone the whole time, its just more like to plan where we're going to meet or to see where you are, who I want to go out with and stuff. (Vivian, 17)

Their explanations of what they like about the cellular phone are, to some extent, similar to the aspects of the technology emphasized in the advertising images. As in the Telus ad discussed at the beginning of the chapter, it is getting together with friends and being out together that make the cell phone desirable. What, however, does not appear in the

ads is the convenience of the cell phone, the actual uses of the technology. Unlike the Bell Telephone advertising series of the 1960s there are few images today that directly attempt to teach the consumer how a product should be used. Rather it is expected that consumers will already know how to use the object. What is therefore being sold is the lifestyle. And for teen girls, if we look to the images, this lifestyle is one where freedom from the home and being out in a public world that centers on friends, is the ideal.

The one time when the phone is imaged in advertising as a signifier of convenience is when it is taken up in ads for other products. For example, in the StriDex Facewipes To Go advertisement (Image 27), the cellular phone was imaged because of the convenience and mobility it signifies. In order for this advertisement to be meaningful, however, it requires that the reader is aware of that the cell phone connotes convenience for the meaning to be transferable. The statements made in the interviews, where the idea of convenience was repeatedly associated with the cellular phone, support that this meaning is one the advertisers can safely assume that the majority of teenage girl readers will know. Thus in ads for the cell phones it is not necessary to directly represent this use, this convenience, because it is a meaning that has become integral to the technology's social existence.

What these idealized lifestyles that pull the reader's attention into the advertisement can be seen to present is a point of entrance to the complex relationship between consumers and producers of goods. Leiss, Kline and Jhally (1990) argue that modern advertising:

> As an industry, advertising mediates between commodity production and cultural production; as a message form, it adopts, revises, and shapes other cultural message systems; most importantly, through research it appropriates the social structure of markets of goods and audiences for media, and recycles them as strategies targeted toward segments of the population. Thus, advertising is a communications activity through which social change is mediated - and wherein such change can be witnessed. This is not to say that advertising is the central determining factor of the consumer society; rather, we present it here as an

> indispensable interpretative key to understanding complex historical developments. (193)

That advertising is a medium in which social change is both mediated and witnessed is shown by the similarities between advertising and what makes having the cell phone desirable: freedom and independence.

The uses that the girls make of the cellular phone and the focus on independence and fun presented in the advertisements are notably different from the uses for which the girls state their parents purchase the cellular phones for them. But, although it is the parents who pay for the phones, it needs to be noted that these parents not only want their daughters to have the phone, they want her to carry it with her at all times. Thus the advertising works to promote both the parents' and the daughter's interests, for by presenting the cellular phone as cool, they render it a commodity that the teenage girl will want to possess. Once the cellular phone has been constructed as cool the girls will, theoretically, be happy to have one and carry it with her as a status symbol wherever she goes. By desiring to have a cellular phone with her all the time, regardless of how it is used, a position is constructed for the girl in which she will voluntarily accept her parents' tool of surveillance.

Resisting the Gaze

To leave the girls interaction with the cellular phone as merely the outcome of desire for the product created by advertisers to earn their parents' money would be to oversimplify the issue. For the uses that the girls make of their cellular phones not only include uses other than calling their parents - such as calling friends - they also involve uses of the phone to resist their parents' wishes. It is important to note that the cellular phone most of the girls use is not actually their own, but rather a parent's, usually the mother's, which the daughters take with them when they go out at night. If this is not

the case then it is the parents who have paid for the cellular phone and its calling plan. It is on this level of cost that one of the simplest forms of resistance to parental demands and assertion of their right to the technology occurred - the "wasting" of their parents' minutes.

> Like for myself when I take it I always call my friends on it and waste her minutes, but you know I call like not for safety reasons, I call just to talk. (Katherine, 17)

Often, however, their resistance was more direct, such as the strategies taken up to avoid their parents being able to reach them or find out where they were. Frequently, for example, they would refuse to answer the cellular phone when they knew that the caller would be their parent as a way to assert their independence:

> If I didn't want her to call me I'd just turn it off and be like "oh it died" or "oh, I forgot to turn it on". [laughs] (Roshni. 16)

> *Do people like that their parent's can reach them?*
>
> No, that's why like some people have like special rings, so they know that its their parents so they don't answer it. Stuff like that. (Laura, 14)

This waste of minutes / money, however, was a loss that the parents, according to the girls, accepted. Yet, it is through the acceptance of this minor transgression that the parents, in fact, ensure the end they desire is met – that the girl carries the cell phone with her.

Of all the girls, Kirsten most clearly used the cell phone in ways that resisted her parents' desires of how the phone should be used. Although one of the older girls interviewed, she was also one of the girls with the strictest set of rules to abide by - namely a mother who wanted to know her location at all times and frequently called to check up on her.

> My mom bought it for me. I think she bought it basically because she's always like, if I ever went out, she's like 'call me when you get there, call me if you're going somewhere else' and half the time I never called her. And so, now she always calls me. Like if I said I was going to be home at like 11 and if I'm not home at 11:30 then she'll be calling me 'where are you?' But she made the mistake of getting me call display so if I see that she's calling I'll usually just pretend that my phone was off.

In addition to pretending the phone was off she had a number of other strategies to deal with her mother's calls, such as giving misleading (or incorrect) information about her location or activity. These tactics that Kirsten took up can in part be seen as acts of "la parruque" as theorized by Michel de Certeau. They are tactics of resistance - tricks that require "making do with the resources available [and] involves an understanding of the rules, of the strategy of the powerful" (Fiske 1989:38). Kirsten, while always carrying the phone with her and recognizing her mother's worry as the motivation for calling, creates her own space of independence by using the phone in resistant ways. Through these actions, she shows her allegiance to the ideals of being a teen over those of being a daughter. In order to do this she reframes her mother's need to know that she is okay, such that "being okay" and the truthfulness of her statements are no longer connected. Thus the power which the cellular phone gives the parent - knowledge - is resisted and subverted.

> Well just like, um, recently I have this friend and his name's Mike, and we're just friends, and we just started being friends so my mom doesn't know him that well. And I went over to his house to watch a movie one night and I was there, and it was a school night, and I was there 'till about 11:30 and my mom was like 'I was calling your cell phone and you weren't answering it - where were you?' It was cause we were in the basement and the cell doesn't work in his basement and so I was like 'Oh, I was at Michelle's house'. But I don't think that was that big a deal. And sometimes if I'm going to a party or something like that I don't always say I'm going to a party I just say that I'm going to so and so's house.
>
> *So if you're at a party and she calls?*
>
> I usually don't answer it, I just see that it's her calling and then I'll go and call her back. I'll just go to like a quiet room and be like 'sorry, it was ringing in the kitchen I didn't get to it on time'. I'll just call her back to let her know that I'm all right. (Kirsten, 17)

While Kirsten's actions are certainly resistant to some extent, that they were the most 'extreme' examples of subversive behavior given by any of the girls interviewed highlights the non-extremity of the girls' acts of resistance. Part of what seemed to lead to their resistance being so restrained was their constant concern over their parents (not wanting them to worry, wanting to maintain and deserve their trust), which in turn made

it necessary that they be able to justify their minor transgressions. Nevertheless, I refuse to discount their acts for two reasons: first to the girls these are certainly meaningful acts of self-assertion and second they represent an important intersection and incorporation of both ideals of youth (independence) and femininity (thoughtfulness and concern).

Pretending to be in another location and deceiving one's parents about the activities they are partaking in may be far from the resistance to tradition and parental control that putting a pin through your nose and moving to a commune signify, but they are nevertheless resistant acts. As Ganetz (1995) points out, girls' cultures may participate in the market to a much greater extent than subcultures, but this does not mean that they are "conformist, passive and unaware" (85). Rather there may be a complex relationship between resistance and the market, such that girls' resistance is played out through a use of market objects for new and unintended purposes. As Angela McRobbie (1991) argues, girls' may attempt to resist the dominant ideology of school and family through actions not generally considered subversive, such as making adaptations to school uniforms. Despite the apparent conformity of their uniforms, McRobbie reports that the girls she interviewed in her qualitative research invested their dress with added cultural meanings - which signified their resistance to the ideology of school. She states:

> In conclusion, the Mill Lane girls certainly did not conform to the rules and regulations set out by the school. Without resorting to violence in the classroom, or continual truancy, they undermined its authority. But they did this by elevating and living out their definition of 'femininity'. They replaced the official ideology of the school with their feminine culture, one which was organized round romance, pop, fashion, beauty and boys. (McRobbie 1991:51)

As McRobbie points out, there may be resistance in the actions of these girls, but it is a resistance that complies with traditional ideas of gender.

A number of criticisms, however, have been made of McRobbie's reading of the girls' actions as resistance. Sue Lees (1986), for example, rejects McRobbie's analysis of bedroom culture stating that "this is not a form of resistance but is, if anything, an adjustment to their expected feminine role which, by and large, is anticipated to center on the home" (60). Significantly, what this criticism does force one to recognize is the traditionally feminine nature of the path of resistance that girls do choose. Along with Griffiths (1995) I, however, regard Lees outright rejection of interpreting these actions as resistant, an oversimplification of McRobbie's argument. The girls use their uniforms, and cellular phones, as tools to create a space for themselves beyond the home and assert themselves as individuals. Although not appearing particularly subversive when compared to the extremity of male subcultures, their actions are certainly resisting their parents' wishes.

Dawn Currie (1999), also addresses the manner in which McRobbie discusses resistance. While finding it to be an improvement over readings that celebrate youth struggles, she questions the manner in which "McRobbie... reads the meaning of dress off girls' clothing; we are given little sense about the meaning of the dress to the wearers" (221). In order to explore the meanings that dress holds for girls, Currie undertakes interviews. It is because of these interviews that she states:

> We find little evidence that girls (consciously) employ dress as resistance to authority. One result is that very few girls claim that they ever have fights with their parents about what they wear to school. Overall, three themes emerge from girls' discussions about what dress means within school culture: clothes are a vehicle for creativity and self-expression, clothes are an indication of group membership, and clothes are a sign of social status. ... dress is experienced as an expression of social rather than individual identity, revealing the importance of teenage conformity rather than resistance. (221)

Currie's argument that clothing - style - is an expression of a social identity is particularly interesting. In exploring my interviews with these words of Currie's in mind, I found a number of similarities. Parallel to the above quote, the girls I interviewed did not speak

of fighting with their parents about how the cellular phone would be used and they frequently explained their use of the cell phone as advancing their whole social network of friends. Indeed, a main benefit of having a cell phone was its use so "that everyone would be together by the end of the night". The problem with Currie's argument, however, is that it conflates acceptance of any form of group identity with complete conformity. Secondly, although their resistance may not be verbal and confrontary, I would maintain that the girls are still asserting their independence through their little acts of *la perruque*.

On the other hand, I think that Currie's critique is important since it draws attention to the widespread acceptance of parental rules and values that underlie the girls' actions. In the interviews I conducted, this was most clearly reflected when I questioned the girls about their parents' demands upon them, which involved not only cellular phones, but also curfews and the need to call home. Yet, in explaining the rules their parents had implemented and describing how they felt about these rules, none of the girls came out declaring the rules unfair or incomprehensible. Although a few noted their parents could be inconsistent and sometimes a little strict, overall the girls were very likely to support and justify the constraints:

> They'd like me to be home at like 12 or 12:30, and yeah they want me to call if I'm going to be late or something like that.
>
> *How do you feel about their rules?*
>
> I don't know, like I don't really do anything where I need to be out until like 2 in the morning so I'm okay with it sometimes its annoying but - like sometimes my sister stays out until like 6 in the morning and they get like really upset and I like just don't want to have to deal with that so I don't stay out late, cause I know that they stay up until we get home. (Kayla, 17)

> I mean sometimes its annoying, you know, to call like constantly cause half an hour is not a long time. Kay, what time is it? [makes gesture of checking watch] It feels like I constantly have to call her, but I can understand it, she's just worried and she wants to know where I am. (Katherine, 17)

The rules that the girls speak of their parents imposing upon them, despite the popular conceptions of teenage rebelliousness, were accepted as reasonable and understandable. Indeed, there is a widespread acceptance of control amongst these teens. For example, the girls also see cellular phones not being allowed at schools as a good thing, for it stops disruptions in class. Indeed, those people who do break the rules become questionable - who do they have to talk to during the school day, and what kind of people can these be if they are not in school?

Reflecting upon this acceptance of the regulations enacted from above it seems that, despite the widespread discourse that positions youth as rebellious and wanting independence, there is a counter discourse which the teens themselves participate in that is surprisingly conservative. The media, in turn, has taken up this discourse through which youth are not constructed as uncaring, destructive hellions. For example *USA Weekend*, on the basis of their 10th annual national survey on teens and freedom, reports that "Teenagers acknowledge they need and want rules - even if their freedom is curtailed" (Rhule 1997:1). The article continues stating:

> Teens are most willing to sacrifice freedoms in matters of safety and health. Surprisingly, half of the teens in the survey support now-widespread curfew laws that require them to be off the streets at night or face penalties. ... "I totally agree with adults wanting to step up laws to protect millions of minors," says Brandi Yasuoka ... "If teenagers want the freedom to be out later at night, teens have to prove that they can control themselves." (Rhule 1997:2)

According to this article teenagers, even when they do not agree with parental limits to freedom, are willing to concede that the adults making the rules do so for legitimate reasons. As one 17-year-old girl is quoted as saying "Life is full of responsibility and tough decisions - why take on more than you can handle?" (5) Thus, she turns to parents, schools, and legislators to make these tough decisions for her. The results of this survey, however, do not break down how these ideas about freedom were impacted by gender, race, or class. Rather, the article presents youth as a homogeneous group

who all want adults to provide the rules for them to maneuver through a complicated and dangerous world.

In contrast, in my interviews the girls' statements about their parents' rules certainly did reflect differences that depended on their cultural background and gender. As mentioned earlier the girls whose parents had immigrated to Canada each explained the restrictions their parents imposed in terms of their cultural background. Notably none of the other girls mentioned anything about their parents' upbringing. The girls were also very aware of the impact that their gender had upon what they were allowed to do, for they imagined that being a boy would lead to having more opportunities to go out. Paradoxically, however, while they were speaking favorably of this increase in freedom that would come with being male, they accepted that their behavior needed to be restricted. Thus, it seems that the girls have internalized their parents' discourse of the public world as dangerous and unsafe.

> There's different things, like they don't want me walking around the streets alone at night, but if I was a guy I don't think they'd be strict about it, because they just assume like no one's going to go after a guy or whatever. Well not no one, but like there's more chance of going after a girl. So I think that would be kind of different. (Victoria, 15)

> They don't really let me stay out really late cause they're strict. And they want to know whom I'm with - like it has to be certain people I'm with, like they have to know them. And I have to call every hour to tell them that I'm okay. ...
>
> *How do you feel about this?*
>
> I think its good cause I see some other friends and their parents don't really care where they are or who they're with or how late they're staying out. So it's good that my parents are doing that, so I like it. I used to get mad about it, cause I used to be like 'oh, my parents are too strict', but now I realize what they're trying to do for me and its better. Yeah, I like it, cause I know that they care about me. (Stephanie, 17)

Stephanie states that she is happy with her parent's rules, because they show that she is cared about - in doing so the disciplining gaze of her parents is fully naturalized. Their desire to know her activities has been reframed as a signifier of love, and therefore it is not something that should be questioned. In turn, any need for force

is removed for Stephanie has internalized the surveillant gaze of her parents. "The use of force is unnecessary to the extent that individuals identify with and internalize the gaze of authority and nicely comport themselves exactly as their leaders and oppressors would want" (MacCannell & MacCannell 1993: 211). Thus as Stephanie voluntarily calls home and tells her parents whom she is with and what they are doing, because she identifies with her parents' concerns regarding the dangers of the world outside the home, she reveals her compliance with her parents' desires.

The conceptualization of themselves as potentially being in danger was a common current throughout all of the interviews. Even Kirsten, who described her numerous tactics to avoid the calls of her mother, stated that what she liked most about having a cellular phone was that it made her feel "safer":

> Um, it just - it makes me feel safer a lot of times, like when I'm driving home at night or something like that. I know that if anything ever happened I'd have my phone with me and I could call my parents or call for help. And I just - it just gives me a way to keep in contact with people which makes me feel good, it makes me feel safer. Generally, it makes me feel safer about everything.

A tension thus arises between wanting independence, wanting to resist one's parents' desires to know about and control one's actions, and an internalized fear that all of the things that they warn you about are true. What this tension highlights is the extent to which individuals, who have a great deal of power removed from them by the gaze, come to identify with the power that is shaping their life. Indeed, as MacCannell and MacCannell (1993) point out, "Individuals, rendered powerless by the gaze, must identify with the very power shaping their lives if they are to seem to regain any power or authority for themselves" (211). Thus the power that parents exert is internalized and rendered invisible. Indeed, it is only to the extent that power is naturalized and invisible that it can be effective: "Power is tolerable only on condition that it mask a substantial part of itself. Its success is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanisms"

(Foucault cited in Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983:134). As Foucault states, we only accept power because we are unaware of it.

Chapter Summary

The use of the cellular phone by teenage girls is a use that is impacted by numerous discourses, two of which were identified, through their intersection, in this chapter. The first was the parental discourse of fear and safety, which constructs the cellular telephone as a tool that will keep teen girls safe because of the accessibility it allows parents to their daughters. The ways in which this discourse constructs the social world were, in turn, questioned through Foucault's theorization of the connection between power and knowledge. From this perspective, the cellular phone can be seen as a tool of knowledge for parents, a way for them, as one girl stated, to keep track of their daughters. Yet, the dangers of the outside world that this parental discourse relies upon, are invisible in the advertised images.

What the advertisements draw upon, in contrast, is a second discourse, of youth and independence. This is a discourse that exists, in part, as a resistance to the demands of parents. In advertisements, particularly those aimed to teen girls, the phone was presented as being fun. There were, in these images, no parents, no rules, no structural demands, only freedom and independence. The girls were shown the cellular phones as a tool that would create independence for them and give them the chance of adventure in the public world. In turn, the cellular phone works as a symbol of this independence and mobility, as is reflected when it is presented as a prop in other advertisements.

When the girls were asked to explain why they had or why they wanted to have a cellular phone, however, it was to the convenience of the technology that they turned.

They acknowledged that they were attracted to the ads that made the phone look fun, however, it was for reasons that were more practical that they used cellular phones. These reasons were the same as boys - to keep in contact with friends and make plans. This use of the phone, however, was not that for which the object had been purchased for them. It was given to them to keep them safe and to enable the parents to keep track of them. Thus the girls' use of the phone to call friends is, to some extent, an act of independence. Yet it also creates a situation in which the desires of the parents are fulfilled, for the cell phone, once it has come to signify "cool" is carried at all times.

At the same time, much more resistive uses of the cell phone were taken up by some of the girls, such as giving misleading information about their location. Although this behavior, when contrasted with that of male subcultures, does not appear particularly resistive, it does follow the same principle of resistance as subcultures, the misuse of objects. At the same time, a tension exists in their resistance for they have not fully rejected the demands of their parents or of traditional values. The girls were, for example, overwhelming in support of their parents' rules and accepted the importance of calling parents. Indeed, regardless of how much they acted to assert their own independence there was an underlying acceptance of the parental discourse that framed the outside world as dangerous. It is through this acceptance, which points to the internalization of parental values, that the discourse of safety has its power. The danger of the outside world, therefore, does not need to appear in advertising images, nor does parental power have to define completely the girls' interaction with the outside world, for the girls have internalized this discourse that frames the world as unsafe and thus ties them to the home. That this is accepted unquestioningly points to the power that parents have over their children's perspective of the world, even if it may differ from that presented in advertising. In turn, as will be discussed in the next chapter, the girls

are also controlled through an individualizing discourse that is intimately related to both the internalized discourse of safety and the counter-discourse of independence. For it is through this recognition of themselves as independent individuals, who are limited by their parents' gaze and the threats of the outside world, that the girls monitor their own actions and make the "good" choices that their parents, and society, desire.

Chapter Five

Individualizing and Accessorizing

Chapter four presented a discussion of one of the two forms of visibility that Foucault identifies as being crucial to disciplinary power, the synoptic visibility of surveillance. In that section, the cellular telephone was examined in its relationship with teenage girls through a parental discourse of safety that rendered the cellular phone a tool of "the gaze". This parental gaze, however, was conceptualized through Foucault's idea of power not as completely determined and top down, but as a relation between subjects that always involves resistance. Thus, a counter-discourse of independence that the girls took up through their mis-use of the cellular phone was examined. A main tension, I would argue, in this struggle between youth and parents, between safety and independence, is the teen girls' desire for self-definition and the development of a unique identity. Bibby and Posterski (1992), for example, argue that what teens require is the chance for a "responsible use of freedom" (214) through a balance between guidance and freedom. Or, as they cite a 17-year-old stating, "To me freedom means more guidance and less restrictions" (213). What youth want is the opportunity to make choices. What parents need to provide, according to Bibby and Posterski, are opportunities to make choices and to have responsibility, based on trust (217). They state, however, that "The younger teens have a flair for irresponsible freedom. Their drive for freedom means the unrestricted right to do what they want with whom they want for as long as they want. For their own protection younger teens need more restrictions. Until they start exercising good judgment, they need rules" (213). It is this conceptualization of "good judgment" which is critical to the second form of visibility, individualizing visibility, which Foucault theorized works with synoptic visibility in the accumulation of knowledge, and therefore power, in modern societies. The focus of this

individualizing visibility is the normalization of the aims of those with more power, for once one recognizes that they are an individual under surveillance, they will begin to make the "good" choices which society/their parents desire.

Individualizing Discourses

Foucault, in his focus on the disciplining practices of prisons and hospitals, argued that a key outcome of their surveillance was knowledge about individuals. To have knowledge of an individual, he argued, was to have power over them. Thus, ways of knowing came to be understood as ways of exercising power over individuals. Part of this collection of knowledge was the development of techniques of individualization found in the fields of medicine, psychiatry and criminology. As Sawicki (1988) writes, the individualizing practices within the institutions associated with these new fields (hospitals, asylums and prisons) created divisions between "healthy/ill, sane/mad, legal/delinquent, which, by virtue of their authoritative status, can be used as effective means of normalization and social control" (22). These divisions lead to both the incarceration and detention of those labeled deviant, and more subtle divisions "such as labeling one another or ourselves as different or abnormal" (22). As Foucault writes:

> It is a normalizing gaze, a surveillance that makes is possible to qualify, to classify and to punish. It establishes over individuals a visibility through which one differentiates them and judges them. (Foucault cited in Sheridan 1980: 154)

The construction of the individual as a source of knowledge is seen by Foucault to occur through the conceptualization of the individual as a 'case'. As a case s/he "may be described, judged, measured, compared with others in his [her] very individuality and [it is] the individual who has to be trained or corrected, classified, normalized or excluded" (Sheridan 1980: 155). No longer is it only those at the top of the hierarchy who are studied and known about as individuals, as it had been in earlier regimes of

power. Rather, as surveillance becomes the mode of control and as power becomes more pervasive, all individuals see themselves as the objects of study and knowledge. When individuals recognize themselves as a subject of the gaze, a subject who will be judged and classified according to how well they match what is deemed normal, they internalize the need to control their own behavior, such that it fits with what is expected. Thus it is through this individualization, along with the recognition of a synoptic gaze that can forever monitor, that power is exerted in a disciplinary regime:

> In a disciplinary regime ... individualization is 'descending'; as power becomes more anonymous and more functional, those on whom it is exercised tend to be more strongly individualized; it is exercised by surveillance rather than ceremonies, by observation rather than commemorative accounts, by comparative measures that have the 'norm' as reference rather than genealogies giving ancestors as points of reference; by 'gaps' rather than by deeds. In a system of discipline, the child is more individualized than the adult, the patient more than the healthy man, the madman and the delinquent more than the normal and non-delinquent. (Foucault cited in Sheridan 1980: 156)

According to Foucault, the types of power relations that exist today are not relations that should be seen as imposed upon individuals, but rather relations that work on the level of individuals. "I don't think that we should consider the 'modern state' as an entity which was developed above individuals, ignoring what they are and even their very existence, but on the contrary as a very sophisticated structure, in which individuals can be integrated, under one condition: that this individuality would be shaped in a new form, and submitted to a set of very specific patterns" (Foucault 1980: 214). The control of these individuals, therefore, cannot be the random punishment of the past, but must be methods that shape them into the desired form of the society, such as surveillance and individualization.

If we return to the above quotation from Bibby and Posterski, the way in which youth are constructed as individuals in order to integrate them into the whole, can be seen very clearly. According to Bibby and Posterski, teens want freedom, but until they

willingly behave in a way that is deemed "normal" and "appropriate", they cannot be free to make choices. It is only once they have internalized the expectations of society, and come to see them as desirable and legitimate, that they should be granted the privilege of decision-making. There is, however, always the fear that the choices they make will not be those desired - that they will not have fully learnt the values of society and will make "irresponsible" choices. Thus, the surveillance of the cellular phone becomes key, because it enables the youth a sense of freedom and the opportunity to make decisions, while keeping them under the parental eye.

The move to individualization as a method of control is, according to Foucault, closely tied to the dual meanings of "subject", such that the individual is simultaneously controlled by power and hyperaware of their own being:

> This form of power applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him. It is a form of power which makes individuals subjects. There are two meanings of the word *subject*: subject to someone else by control or dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to. (Foucault 1980: 212)

As has been discussed in earlier chapters, the teenage girl is very much a subject of her parents' demands, because of both direct parental control and her dependence upon them for the necessities of life while in school. The teenage years are also crucial to the development of identity, to seeing oneself as an individual who can make independent choices and understand their consequences. Through the construction of themselves as individuals, teens become subjects in the second sense. For it is through this sense of being a subject, as having the opportunity to make choices and the knowledge that we must accept the consequences of our choices, that we control and monitor ourselves. Thus, we learn to turn the disciplining gaze inward. For now, the teen is not only a subject of her parents' demands, but she has also become tied to her own actions.

The use of individualizing strategies to maintain and legitimize traditional power relations can, for example, be seen within teenzines. Through the magazines, teen girls are presented with an idealized world that could be anywhere and addressed through their membership in the social world of youth. However, the conceptualization of 'youth' as a group, which would be signified by the pronoun 'we', is conspicuously absent. Rather, as Dawn Currie writes (1999) "the discursive opening which is created for the reader occurs through the use of the first-person singular 'I'. As an 'eye' created for the reader to view the social world of adolescence, this positioning has the paradoxical effect of transforming questions about membership in 'the social' into questions about 'personal relations' " (191). What impacts the social hierarchies that surround girls have upon their lives is overlooked in a focus upon the individual. A fashion trend is directed towards making "you", the individual, look good; a problem with your boyfriend is constructed as one that "you" need to deal with in a particular way. Within both the text and the advertisements of magazines, the appeal is always to an individualized reader - to a girl sitting alone in her bedroom. "The construction of an individualized reader in this way is important because it directly invites the reader to compare herself to the norms of femininity constructed by the text" (Currie 1999: 205).

It is in the "problems pages" of teenzines and women's magazines that this orientation to the isolated individual has been most criticized. According to several feminist researchers (Currie 1999; McCracken 1993; McRobbie 1991; Winship 1987), the inclusion of sections in magazines that are organized in a question and answer format, show women that problems they have are common, but that the solutions to these problems are individual solutions. A husband who does not listen to what you need or an overbearing mother, are not seen as symptoms of socially constructed gender and hierarchical roles, but as things which the individual needs to fix for herself.

According to McCracken (1993), these problem pages, in combination with images of perfected models and advertisements for products that will improve the individual,

> Help to develop insecurities and anxieties in women by constantly repeating themes in features and advertising. While magazines are not always the initial cause of anxiety, they often encourage and exacerbate these feelings, and suggest that increased consumption is the remedy. ... The technique of question and answer encourages readers to think that their peers have written to the magazines with such problems. If the reader hasn't yet thought about herself in these fragmented terms, she should begin to do so if she wishes to be beautiful and share the concerns of her peers. (137)

It is because of this very self-analysis, brought about by having one's attention drawn to their shortcomings, to the ways in which they do not match the ideal, that the girl will begin to monitor herself and make choices using "good" judgment.

A second outcome of this fragmented understanding of oneself is that the girl learns that, in order to be "normal", she must turn to consumer products. Through the consumption of goods based on ideas of fashion and ideals of perfection the girl consumer is both normalized and individualized. Ganetz (1995) writes, "fashion provides a possibility simultaneously to satisfy the individual's desire to identify with others (I want to be like the others) and, through personal style, to distinguish oneself, to be unique" (72). The second aspect of this, that of uniqueness, is commonly believed to be an even more significant to teens today than in the past. No longer is it enough for teens to be clean and well-dressed to fit in as it was in the 1950s, for today there is a multiplicity of rapidly changing styles and images to choose from in the creation of your individual look. The need to create an identity today is seen by many as an outcome of the growing instability of social divisions and ideas about what the future will bring. Kirsten Drotner, for example, writes "the young are supposed to make rational choices with goals in sight while the future is becoming ever more confused and uncertain, and consequently the need arises to construct meaning from contradictory experiences" (cited in Ganetz 1995: 77). One aspect of these contradictory experiences are the

changes to gender roles/ideals, that have created a wider array of possibilities for girls to aim towards and more encouragement to do so, while not erasing the conceptualization that domestic demands are still the duty of women.

This conceptualization of the conflicting demands faced by teens, however, becomes problematic when it is taken to mean that there are no boundaries today. This idea is reflected in the work of Ganetz (1995), who argues:

> Modernity's razing of norms and traditions brings to light a number of questions during childhood and adolescence (and also later since adults live among the ruins of tradition as much as young people). Parents no longer function as boundary-setters and authorities, and the path to independence requires trial runs. Our culture is overloaded with sometimes contradictory messages about how one is to be, what one should believe, what is right and wrong, how one should look. (1995: 78)

While I do agree with Ganetz that there are more opportunities for youth to experiment with image today than in the past and that the desire of young people to do so is likely related to the current varieties and uncertainties of identity, I disagree with the statement that "parents no longer function as boundary-setters and authorities". Rather, I believe that parents are still intimately involved in the setting of boundaries, although these boundaries may have shifted from those of the past such that it may no longer be a fight to wear a skirt "that short" or lipstick "that bright" to a party. But this freedom to construct an image by picking and choosing from consumer products does not mean that one is free of controls. Indeed, that it is in terms of fashion that teenage girls have choices, reinforces traditional relations in two ways: 1) it reinforces that feminine interaction with goods should be on the level of consumption and; 2) it creates a 'safe' venue for choice. The choices, which girls make when deciding on their fashion style are, at least for the great majority of girls, choices among consumer goods. Through these choices they are learning values that are socially desired, particularly how to choose products that will

enable them to "fit in", which points to their acceptance of the importance of being 'normal' and fitting into the social ideal.

What this increase in the variety of choices one has regarding style points to, rather than a breakdown in boundaries, is an increase in individualization - or at least an increase in the appearance of its signifiers. This search for a personal style is, at its root, the search for an identity. Bibby and Posterski (1992), based on their national survey of youth in Canada, concur that there is an increase in the importance of the individuality among teens, despite the high value that teens reportedly place upon interpersonal relationships. For example, they state, "the centrality of the individual in teenage minds can also be seen in their perception of the key factors that influence their lives. Asked in the same survey for their views of the impact that a variety of possible sources have on their lives, 'self' was conspicuous by its presence" (165). These values - of freedom, personal rights, personal dreams, personal power, personal fulfillment – to which teens are turning, Bibby and Posterski argue, mirror the current ideals of Canadian society at large (164).

Postfeminism and Digital Discourse

This increase in individualism within society can be seen as tied to the popularity of neo-liberal social values today, which are also reflected in current views of technology that Melanie Stewart-Millar (1999) has described as digital discourse. According to Stewart-Millar, digital discourse works to sell new technological products on the promise of change, while reinforcing a very specific set of power relations. Part of the power of the digital discourse, she argues, is its focus upon ideas of the postmodern, of fragmentation and of multiplicity. Despite this focus, she states, "digital discourse seeks instability and indeterminacy only in so far as rapid technological change necessitates

them. ... [it] intensifies those power relations with which we are already familiar, repackaging them in the postmodern aesthetic of the day" (35-36). The world idealized in this discourse is a very white, upper class, male world presented through "the image of the lone white male subject, battling against natural and man-made elements and other individuals. ... He is a man of reason in a world of chaos; a man in control of both himself and his world" (51). [1] For women, digital discourse is presented through a perception that the goals of feminism have been achieved - or postfeminism. Thus, the ideal is highly individualistic presenting success as something that the individual has the choice to achieve, similar to the perspective of liberal feminism. Yet, the ideals that women can chose from, similar to the idealized images of telephone use in the public sphere described in chapter three that focused upon fun, are non-threatening and fit closely with traditional gendered ideals.[2]

It is this ideal of postfeminism that is the predominant image shown in advertisements directed towards women for products of the new digital era. An example of this is an advertisement for Motorola, Web W/O Wires (Image 30). The two-page spread images a woman's arm outstretched with a cellular phone, that has Internet capabilities, in her hand at the far side of the page. The image is set in a non-space, imaging a white background broken only by the woman's arm, phone and the product name. The body to which this arm connects is excluded. Thus in selling the 'web w/o wires', the advertisers are presenting the idea of both spatial freedom and of a new more connected world, such that we are simultaneously in touch everywhere, and freed

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[1] The hypermasculine construction of the individual which exists within the digital discourse has been framed by Barbara Ehrenreich as a "developing historically from a moral climate dictating responsibility, self-discipline and commitment to the role of breadwinner, to a climate endorsing 'irresponsibility, self-indulgence and an isolationist detachment from the claims of others". (cited in Stewart-Millar 1999: 51)

[2] This conceptualization of postfeminism is very closely related to the commodity-feminism of Silverman that was discussed in chapter two.

from constraints, indeed we are even freed from the constraints of the body. Interestingly, however, the hand that holds the phone is clearly a feminine hand, with its manicured and painted nails. As the color of the nail polish matches the cell phone, the importance of image and appearance to femininity are reinforced at the same time as the idealized rhetoric that we are free of our bodies, free to construct our identity is presented. It seems, therefore, that while we may be able to choose some aspects of our identity, the choice to rid ourselves of gendered prerogatives is not one of the options.

This theme of freedom from limits and the construction of postfeminist values of individual achievement are present in a substantial number of advertisements which image the cellular phone. For example two images, both from the January 2000 issue of Cosmopolitan emphasize the value of the cellular phone as a tool to "Challenge the Limits". The first advertisement, for Samsung, images a woman stepping out of a car with a briefcase, newspaper, and laptop computer in her hands (Image 31). In her ear is the transmitter for her voice activated Samsung cellular phone. The second, an advertisement for a book entitled "How to be Number One: In your own world", features the cover of the book which has a cartoon image of a woman standing on top of the world with a Daytimer at her side and a cellular phone upheld (Image 32). Both images, by placing the central emphasis upon individual achievement and success, rely on postfeminism, with the cellular phone becoming both a tool to achieve this success and a symbol of its achievement. In both ads the woman pictured is alone, the solo conqueror of her universe. In the first you, as interpellated viewer, will "Challenge the Limits"; in the latter you gain "the courage and confidence to be Number One in your own world". You, the reader, are a woman in charge of your own destiny and future, there are no structural forces in these individualized worlds which can constrain you; the

only constraints are your lack of initiative and confidence. The cellular phone, in turn, becomes a symbol of this new, borderless world of achievement and success. It is a tool that you can take up and use to benefit yourself in this highly competitive world.[3]

Individuality as Marketing Tactic

It is at this junction that the cellular phone exists, at the intersection between fashion item, digital discourse, and desire for control and independence (as discussed in the last chapter). Each of these discourses is reflected in how the cell phone is used and taken up by teenage girls, however they do not influence each user to the same extent. For example, while safety is a major concern for parents, and is accepted as an important aspect of the technology by the majority of the girls, it is notably invisible in advertisements for the cellular phone. Rather what is emphasized in attempts to sell the technology to teenage girls are the cell phone's appearance and its ability to give girls independence and individuality.

In the majority of advertising images for the cellular phone directed towards teenage girls, there is a focus upon image. In discussing this focus on image, I will draw largely upon advertisements for Nokia phones. There are two main motivations behind this. The first is that when I asked the girls which brand was most common and most desirable, "Nokia" was the most frequent response.[4] In fact, when the girls went through the ads that I had brought to the interviews, the ads for Nokia cell phones were the most quickly recognized (particularly the image "Attention Teenage Girls" which had also been a billboard).

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[3] It may very well be for this competitive edge that women do take up the cell phone. Indeed this was what Tannenbaum (1991) found through a survey of cellular phone users that compared men's and women's reasons for having cellular phones.

[4] Notably a few of the girls said that they had no idea about what was popular or what types of phones people were more likely to have.

The second reason is that Nokia has actively produced and marketed the cellular phone as a fashion item, a strategy that has seemingly been successful for them given the high recognition of their product by the girls interviewed. This focus upon the cellular phone as a fashion item is reflected in an article in the April 2000 issue of Vogue entitled "Ring Leader". The article, which centers upon Frank Nuovo the head designer for Nokia, begins by describing the high-fashion appeal of Nuovo's phones:

> Throughout his wanderings around the globe these days ... Frank Nuovo often finds himself feeling the way he imagines a fashion designer must feel when a fashion designer spots the particular items of clothing he has designed out in the field. The big difference ... however, is that the interaction between the consumer and the product is a little more hands-on. ... When his aisle-mate discovers that he or she is sitting beside the chief designer at Nokia, the maker of the chief cool cell phone, he or she is generally pleased. (Sullivan 2000:234)

His newest phone is, according to the article, "the first fashion phone" (234), a product coveted by Hollywood stars, "Gwyneth Paltrow has said kind things to Frank about his phone, and Calista Flockhart recently dropped him a note to tell him how much she likes it" (244). It is a product that, because of its aesthetic appeal, Nuovo describes as irresistible to women; it is, in his words, a "dream product". This focus upon the stars who "love" his design highlights the extent to which this technological object has become a fashion item. At the same time, the blurring of magazine content between article and advertisement becomes clear. That Vogue has declared that this is "the" phone of the stars, however true it may be, is an excellent marketing strategy. But, by presenting the "information" in the format of an article, the reader is directed to accept the statements as true and objective. Through this strategy the reader is sold the "factual" importance of an attractive cellular phone to a hip image. Just having a cellular phone is no longer enough.

In describing the fashionability of Nokia's cellular phones to women, the article reflects a gendered conceptualization of technological use. What is emphasized,

therefore, is the cell phone's image, its' colors, its' size: "The 8129 is so small, so colorful, so delicate - the nearly sheer colors shift in the outdoor light - that it was introduced in Paris during Fashion Week. ... Over and over, in describing the goal of his design team, Frank used the term *humanized technology*, which makes sense even if it sounds like an oxymoron" (emphasis in original Sullivan 2000: 238). Thus, it is presented that for the cell phone to be made human it needs to be made aesthetically pleasing. Humanizing the technology, making people want to buy it, is not a case of making its user functions more clear or more intuitive, but of making it small and pretty. Or at least these are the "humanized" aspects that are focused upon when the audience of the advertorial is women.

Returning to Ganetz (1995) it is important to remember that fashion is both that which signifies that you are part of a group and that which you choose to show yourself as unique. Today appearing to be unique and individual is increasingly central to a hip and fashionable image. According to the images, creativity and self-expression are trendy (of course within *very* strict boundaries). It is this idea of uniqueness and individuality that the Nokia ads play upon when they are marketing to girls. An example of this can be seen in an advertisement that images a silver cellular phone against a silver background (Image 33). The text beside the image reads, "Designed to comfortably fit your face, hand, and mood." As the consumer who is called upon by the ad, you are shown that the product is adaptable to you, that it is something that you can make your own. At the top of the image are a series of the different colors of faceplates that can be chosen from, beside which is the text, in very small print, "Along with easy-to-use features like 30 ringing tones, the Nokia 5100 Series wireless phone sports X-press-on color covers that snap on and off. So your phone can reflect whatever you're feeling." As the color of the phone reflects your feelings it becomes a mirror of you.

That which it has been shown to signify in images towards adult women - success, prestige, being-in-demand – shifts, such that your individuality is what the cell phone signifies. The reader, therefore, learns that the products they chose, particularly those that "fit" their face, are products that reflect their identity to those around them. Thus, if you want to be fashionable, you must have a product that presents the correct / fashionable image. For it is not only your taste that your phone projects, but who you are. It is not just a consumer product that you carry, but a part of you that fits you and mirrors you.

The idea that a cellular phone can reflect your uniqueness and your identity is also presented in a six-page Nokia spread (Image 34). This advertisement consists of a picture of model Niki Taylor on each page against a plain studio backdrop. In each photograph a different "identity" or style is presented through the model's clothing that is, according to the text, associated with particular types of music. The first image presents her as a "normal" girl, dressed in jeans and a black top. In this, and each of the following images, she holds a cellular phone out towards the reader. The text on this page works to explains what is shown in the rest of the advertisement:

> Make the call. Music and fashion complete each other - just try to imagine one without the other. Together they give you the power to shed inhibitions, assume a new identity, and express yourself. Supermodel Niki Taylor calls up the many sides of her personality with help from Nokia, the world's largest manufacturer of wireless phones.

The image is distinguishable from magazine fashion layouts only by the words "special advertising section" on the top of each page which subtly remind the reader that there is some difference between this an advertisement and the surrounding editorial content.

Following this introductory page the ad creates a series of images - based on "music and fashion" - in which different cellular phones are presented. The second page presents is "techno girl". Here an idealized image of the future is suggested

through the model's attire, a silver metallic suit with a matching phone, and the text. The third has Taylor standing, hip thrust to the side in a tight dress, being "salsa picante" and drawing upon an image of Latino music. The text here reinforces the focus of the image on sexuality as something that the reader can have with the purchase of this phone by stating: "Ignite some interest with your Nokia 282 wireless phone." It is to rock music that they turn for the fourth image, with Taylor dressed in a white leather suit with flames down the arms and an orange cell phone in hand. The same cellular phone, the Nokia 5100, but with a floral rather than orange faceplate, transforms you from rocker to hippie girl. Through the purchase of this faceplate one can, according to the ad, "expand your mind with a psychedelic X-Press-On color cover ... the first to let you snap-on a closetful of bold colors to match your every mood". Thus for the new girl of "bohemian rhapsody" it is not drugs that expand your mind, but the purchase of a cell phone cover. In the final image Taylor is photographed as a hip urban chick, dressed in a tight leopard print outfit again holding the 5100, in "anything but basic black ... here in Gloss Midnight Xpress-On". Or black.

What is notable about this advertisement is that, in its focus upon fashion, the product that it is being sold becomes nearly invisible. During the interviews, this six-page spread was one of the advertisements that I asked the girls to comment on and from their responses it was clear that they viewed the image more as a fashion layout than as an advertisement for the cellular phone.[5] According to some of the girls, however, the use of this fashion layout style was detrimental to the ability of the ad to do what it was "supposed to do", sell the product, because the cell phone was lost in the images.

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[5] It is, however, hard to say how they would have looked at the images had it not been in the context of an interview. As they were already primed to read the images in terms of the cellular phone they may have focused upon very different aspects of the image than had they just come upon it while flipping through a magazine.

> Well, I could see this one and like how it would fit in more. Like usually they put ones like this one in fashion magazines, cause they're kind of using fashion as the way to advertise. Its kind of neat how they did like the different cell phones with the different kind of - I don't know - I guess image of the same girl, but I don't know it doesn't really advertise. It's kind of like what does she have to do with anything, I don't know. (Lindsey, 17)

> I think the models are getting way more attention out of this than the phones. If I was flipping through this magazine I wouldn't of even, unless I stopped and was reading all of this, I wouldn't have even paid attention to the phones. I would have been like, that's a nice shirt, that's a nice jacket. I don't know. So, this ad wouldn't have done anything for me. Like I wouldn't have been like "Oh my god, I've got to get that phone". (Vivian, 17)

Yet, it seems that this must be, at least in part, what Nokia desires. The ad works because it naturalizes that the cell phone is part of a constructed image. If the reader were attracted to an image, of which six are presented to choose from, then arguably he/she would study the parts of the dress and read the text associated to the image that he/she wished to be like. In reading the text, the audience learns that it is not the shirt or the jacket that is crucial to the image, but the cellular phone. Thus, that it is the cellular phone that will enable the reader to take on a particular identity, is anchored in the text. By distracting the reader's attention away from the recognition of the images as an ad for cellular phones, Nokia are able to have a greater variety of audience members analyze the image. It is not just those girls who want cellular phones that will read these images, but arguably all girls, as they search for the perfect image and identity.

The advertisement, with the same model in a number of styles, creates another tension for the girls. Through the ad the girls are presented with someone whom they recognize from the pages of fashion magazines, model Niki Taylor. Yet simultaneously they are shown that Taylor's identity is not singular but rather multiple through the numerous styles she wears, which enable her to "assume a new identity". Thus, in looking at the image, girls are both presented with an image to emulate and use in developing their own sense of self and they are reminded that who they are, is fluid and can be chosen. It may be one model, but there is no "true" identity, just a number of

costumes to put on. For the girl readers this lack of one coherent statement, while good because it presented possibilities, was also confusing.

> Um, well I think it was a good idea to get a model like Niki Taylor. I don't know. Personally it doesn't have an effect on me, but I can see how some people would like kind of tune into it and like associate her beauty and - you know? Her face is exactly the same on each page [laughs] you could like associate that with having a phone.
>
> *Do you think that people choose phones by the image?*
>
> Yeah. These are a lot like the Gap ads and the Calvin Klien ads and stuff like that people associate that, like that attitude, with the phone. It has nothing to do with the phone, but whatever, that's the point of advertising. (Kirsten, 17)

In one sense, the girls' feel that the advertisements do not make clear statements about what they are selling and what the product "means". At the same time, however, there is the idea that these ads, by selling a product through image and attitude, are "tricking" those "other" girls who are not as media-adept as they are.[6] The "point of advertising", at least to Kirsten, is not about selling the product, rather the product becomes incidental in the selling of attitude.

Thus, Kirsten's interpretation of the image reveals, to some extent, a critical interaction with the advertising images that goes beyond the surface. By invoking the term critical I want to suggest, following Liebes and Katz, that Kirsten's reading pointed to her "awareness of the constructed nature" (Barker 1997:121) of the ad and revealed that she saw the ad as the outcome of a particular industry. This stands in contrast to many of the other girls' readings, which discussed how the ad reflected reality, or a referential reading. Referential reading was, for example, prominent in the discussion of the Steve Madden advertisement in chapter three. Kirsten's statements, unlike those that compare the image to an idea of reality, hint towards a semiotic reading of the ad.

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[6] The tendency for audiences to refer to other readers as less critical or more easily damaged by the images presented is a common trend, particularly found in audience research into television, called third person effects.

A semiotic reading of the advertisement clearly presents the way in which the advertisers attempt to have the meaning of one signifier transferred to another. On each page of the advertisement there is the construction of a set of ideals that "fit" with a particular image. These ideals are associated with a particular cellular phone such that these meanings are transferred onto the phone. Thus, having an orange faceplate on a phone comes to signify that its owner is rebellious and adventurous. In this ad, however, the clarity of this transference of meaning onto the product is complicated by the similarities between the products that are gaining the new meanings. While the differences in signification are meant to help the consumer distinguish between products, in this ad the products and the idealized consumer (Niki Taylor) are so similar, despite changes in image, that the belief that a product can signify a particular identity becomes problematic. It is obviously the same girl and the cell phones are obviously similar. All that is changing are the externals, the appearances. Thus the signification works on a second level, it shows the reader that the cellular phone is crucial to all attempts at creating an individual identity, be it raver, hippie, or urban chic. The particularities are something which you control as you have the choice of the faceplate or the outfit, but to be cool (however you define that) the cellular phone is a necessary accessory.

In the interviews, it was the model's changing identity that the girls focused on, with the exception of Victoria who talked about the different cell phones shown.

> See its showing like all the different colors of them, and I think that's kind of cool, like showing the different colors of them and stuff. I guess they put the model on there just to like show, like blah, blah, blah, she has it, she's advertising for them sort of thing. I don't really care if she's on there. I think the different colors and stuff is cool. If I was going through it I would look at the different colors and the different styles of phones that they have but I wouldn't look twice at her, I wouldn't like put it up on my wall or anything. (Victoria, 15)

What is important about the images to Victoria is the appearance of the phones, how they look, but apparently not how the model looks, nor the variety of images being

portrayed. Her reading, as such, was considerably different from those of all the other girls. I believe that in part, this may be explained by the fact that she was the girl who most wanted to have a cellular phone of all those interviewed. This may, therefore, suggest that those who are in the market for the product focus more directly upon what the advertisers want them to look at - she looked at the cellular phones, not the model's attire or identity. Her reading was, in many ways, much closer to a referential reading, as she did not question the legitimacy of the images, but rather pinpointed the product and emphasized what desirable qualities it had.

For each of the other girls, the focus in discussing the ad was the way it associated different images with the different styles of phone. Reactions to this marketing tactic ranged a great deal, highlighting the potential that exists for, if not different readings of images, at least different emotive reactions to them. This similarity and difference point to both the impacts of the structures of ideology which lead us to particular readings and simultaneously the potential for agency and the creation of variable meaning.

It was Jessica who had the most positive reading of the imaging of multiple identities; a strategy that she believed opened the product up to more people.

> So are they trying to target different kinds of girls, is that what they're doing?
>
> *Your guess is as good as mine.*
>
> They must really like this woman - it's the same person in each ad. Oh, this one's for the ravers, this one's for the rock girl. Each one has a different face plate or a different kind of phone. Its kind of - oh, I like that one [points to "bohemian rhapsody"] its really cute, actually. At least its kind of cool that they're trying to target different kinds of people not just the one. They're all kind of like very hip, and the way they stereotyped it as well.
>
> *What do you mean by stereotyped it?*
>
> Well you've got your like normal alternative girl right here and she's holding a normal looking phone. And then there's the techno girl dressed all in silver and she's got the little silver phone with her hair done all sexy and whatever. And the rock girl who has bright flashy colors on and then the bright flashy phone and her hair's all over the place. Same with all these - like there's the really posh girl, posh little phone that folds up really small and fits in her little purse, and then there's the bohemian girl who has the flower one that I

like. I like it but its still really stereotyped, you know? Same with this girl with the leopard - totally stereotyped it. (Jessica, 17)

The images, for Jessica, contain both positive and negative aspects. Positively, it images difference, something that she questioned in each ad discussed - was there a space for differing identities? This focus seemed to stem from her own identity as lesbian, which she believed to be different from what most people thought was "normal". Her interaction with media texts reflected a need to find differing images, whether this was through gay culture magazines such as *Out*, or cutting up magazines for "use in decolage". At the same time as she emphasized her enjoyment of the image's presentation of difference and stated that she liked one of the products, she also rejected the "stereotypes" that the ad worked upon. For while the image may present different kinds of girls, it is constructed using only one girl. Thus it is not different types of people with different individual identities being imaged; rather individualism has been reduced to a set of consumer products that form an image. As the images become caricatures, the depth of the differences and the variety of lived experiences they point to are erased in a turn to consumerism.

For other girls, Christina in particular, there was a very strong negative reaction to the advertisement based on the belief that it was suggesting that through a consumer product you could become a different person.

Its like [reads from text] 'together they give you the power to shed inhibitions, assume a new identity, express yourself'. I don't think so.

How come?

To say that its going to change who you are cause ... So its like you're all these different people, because of the different colors? Right! No, I don't think so. My color is red so I'm going to look like that [points to salsa picquante]. I don't think so, doesn't work for me.

So how do you feel about the ad?

Its phony, it's superficial. Especially for like people who believe in everything they read, its like saying that "I'm going to look like that if I have that phone". It's not going to happen! Sorry, I don't think so. There's no way I'm going to look like her, ever. No. ... I'd read it cause I'd be like "Oh, cool she looks good there and she looks kinda bad there". But I

> wouldn't be like 'Oh, I've gotta get that phone so I can look like that there'. I don't know - I don't think a cell phone changes who you are. (Christina, 16)

Christina's reaction to the image again shows tensions in her reactions to the ad, for while she enjoys the images as a fashion layout, she believes they are, to some extent, bad for they perpetuate the idea that by purchasing a product you will become someone different. From both Christina and Jessica, there is a recognition that advertisements are not "real" but that they are constructed ideals. Yet, what images they construct are seen by both girls to impact how *other* girls define and make meaning of their lived experiences. What the girls believe to be the "danger" of the images is the perception that you can buy an identity, that you can become someone else through the purchase of products. If this is the danger, it follows that the belief must be that each individual has a true inner identity.

Real Individuality

It is this belief in a true individual identity that highlights one of the central tensions between the advertising images and the girls' ideas: how one conceives of and conceptualizes individuality. The individuality presented in advertising images is one that is constructed and works through the placement of objects which have meanings that signify to the reader one identity out of a predetermined number of possibilities. The girls, in contrast, believe there is something more fundamental to identity that the advertisements do not show. It is not "true" individuality that the ads show, but a superficial attempt at representing it through a reliance on objects. Fundamentally both are speaking the same discourse, that of individualism, the problem for the advertisement, however, is how to represent individualism to a diverse group connected by only their age and gender. Where the girls want the ads to show them "reality", the best that a representation can create is an image, which may reflect some lived

experiences, but not others.[7] At the same time the advertisers want to call upon as many of these girls, who have come to see themselves as unique individuals, as possible. [8]

How to overcome this tension that is created by the impossibility of representing "true" individuality? Draw upon that which unifies them, being a teenage girl. By framing the image as oriented to teenage girls, they are inherently included. Once it is established that the ad is speaking directly to them as teens, they are brought into the discourse of the ad. With this group of committed readers, a return to individuality and the construction of individual identities is possible. At least this appears to be the strategy of another Nokia ad, the ad that received the most positive reception of all the cell phone advertisements discussed.

The ad, which took up the final three pages of the January 2000 issue of Flare, begins with the magazine's back cover (Image 29). The page is orange with the screen of the cellular phone in the center upon which are the words: "Attention Teenage Girls! Hours of Talk Time". In the lower right hand corner is an inset, in matching orange, of a Nokia handset. This page of the advertisement has also been used as a billboard, and was consequently recognized by several of the girls. During the interviews each girl, without any prompting, commented on this particular page, often because of the way it

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[7] Dawn Currie (1999) explored the desire for advertisements to reflect reality in depth. She found from her interviews that teen readers actively negotiated meaning as the basis for accepting and rejecting texts on the basis of logic (does the image make sense) and lived experience. Images that did not reflect their own experiences of being a teenage girl were rejected.

[8] Chris Barker (1997) discussed the importance of "reality" through research involving teens and soap operas. Here it is shown that teens both focus on the images "as if it were the real world" while recognizing "the constructed nature of the text" (337). Thus, like the girls I interviewed, there was a search among these participants for what was real about the images, but at the same time it was not accepted as a reflection. Thus, the meanings were not merely absorbed, as ideologically based media theories would suggest, but also potentially resisted based on the individual's "range of resources and cultural competencies" (146). Thus, also explaining the difference between Victoria's reading of the last Nokia ad and those of the other girls.

was directly addressing her. This direct address, in turn, had a very powerful influence upon their desire to consume both the advertisement and the product.

> Yeah, it's cute. I'd read it cause it would be like I'd see this [points to page "Attention Teenage Girls"] and I'd be like 'Oh, that's me, have to read it'. So I'd read it but it wouldn't like change my mind. I'd be like 'oh cool, what's this' and see all the colors and be like 'let's read it, so it makes you read it, but it wouldn't - I don't think it would make me change my mind.
>
> *How do you feel about the ad?*
>
> I like it, it's good. ... It's not like you have to buy this, blah, blah, blah. (Christina, 16)
>
> I like that blue one, its cool.
>
> *So you like that one?*
>
> Yeah, cause its blue. That phone's kind of cool. The cell phone - I think it's more a practical thing than to match your clothes sort of a thing. That's cute - that phone right there. I don't think I'd get it in red though. I don't know, um, if I saw the ad in a magazine - I've seen this on billboards. That's kind of cool, the 'attention teenage girls'. I don't know. That actually kind of made me want to buy one.
>
> *What about it?*
>
> I don't know, it just, not really the 'attention teenage girls', but just its talking right to me, sort of thing, as a teenage girl. And also I like the look of the phone. And I don't know about the color, I don't know if I'd get orange, but I know there's different faceplates, so I like the phone itself. That phone, it's kind of cool, I don't know if I'd buy it. But that phone I'd probably buy. I don't know if I'd read this if I was flipping through a magazine, maybe. I'd read part of it. (Victoria, 15)

That the advertisement is obviously directed towards them was central in motivating the girls to choose to look over the images and text in more depth. This positive reception was reinforced because the girls felt the advertisement addressed them in such a way that they were not being told they had to buy the product to be someone, as with the previous advertisement. Rather, the image was seen to present choices of cellular phones, not of identities. Unlike the ad that used Niki Taylor this one does not suggest that you will be a particular type of person by buying a particular color of phone, but instead shows the different colors and styles of cell phones free of any images of models. That there are no models imaged is a particularly interesting aspect of the advertisement for there is no individual shown for the reader to idealize and emulate.

Rather there is a turn, after the call to attention of the first page, to a more individual form of address. By framing the advertisement in the form of a teenzine, complete with horoscope, quiz, and question and answer sections, the advertisement gives the girls ways to, theoretically, get in touch with their "real" selves, to learn about themselves as individuals. Or more importantly to see themselves as individuals.

Throughout the advertisement, the teenage girl is being spoken to directly, as an individual reader. This form of direct address that the ad uses mirrors that of teenzines in general. This direct address is, as Dawn Currie (1999) argues, a large part of teenzines appeal because there are few aspects of society that currently directly address and attempt to engage youth at the current time. Unlike the majority of institutions that relate to teens in terms of directives, teenzines are seen as speaking to them on an equal level. Indeed the aim of teenzines is, according to the managing editor of *Seventeen*, "to inform, entertain, and give teenage girls all the information they need to make sound choices in their lives" (Peirce 1990: 497). However, as Peirce (1990) points out, it can be argued that the magazines do not give *all* the information, but that they emphasize traditional messages and ignore the other options that could be presented (499).

Being targeted primarily because you are a teenage girl, however, was not something that all of the girls responded to in a positive way. Unlike Christina and Victoria who responded that this form of address would encourage them to engage with the advertisement, others responded that, while it may make them want to read the ad, it relied on unfair stereotypes of teenage girls. Stereotypes that they did not feel applied to them:

> Well this commercial has always been - like the 'attention teenage girls', like the billboards and stuff. I think just as many guys have that phone, like I've seen lots of guys that have that phone too. Buts it's totally again the stereotype. Just like 'hey girls' and of course all the like 14-year-old girls that wanted a phone saw that and said 'I want that phone'.

So where do you think this stereotype comes from?

TV and just like the few girls that always seem to get - I don't know if its always seem to get noticed cause they're better or cause they're more annoying, but - cause they're always chatting away. (Vivian, 17)

Oh, I've seen the 'attention teenage girls' one on billboards and stuff. Matching it to your shoes for the day [laughs] if you're really that concerned with what you look like, you know, you've got a problem. Oh, they give you a little quiz. It's a good layout I guess. They usually just have this on the billboard - the 'attention teenage girls' and a little picture of the phone, which is totally trying to get our market area.

Do you think it's a good way to do that?

Just call us to attention? [laughs] ... I don't know. I laughed the first time I saw it. I said, 'what a trashy ad', actually. It's totally trying to pry at us and get us to buy it. I don't know ... Its definitely aimed at teenage girls, like even the way they word some of this stuff, like 'hit talk and maybe mister wrong-number will turn out to be mister right' you know? Telling you to talk to strangers. ... I don't actually see many [ads] for guys, they must really be targeting the girls because they think they're more impressionable or would use it more. Yeah, that actually does bug me a bit. (Jessica, 17)

As both Vivian and Jessica point out, the ad may be speaking directly to teenage girls and the experiences, but it does so in a manner that relies upon stereotypes and negative expectations of teenage girls. The readings of the ad that Vivian and Jessica give are, clearly, resistant to the intentions of the marketers, for both girls bring out and critique the traditional expectations which the ad relies upon. Despite this reading, however, they do not completely reject the ad's message.

If you were choosing a phone, what kind of things would -

The features I could get. Like I really like call display and the e-mail option is a really cool one. And probably the size of it - I wouldn't want a really tiny one cause I'd be scared of breaking it and I wouldn't want a huge one cause I'd like it to fit in my bag or whatever. But mostly the features and the price that I would get on the features. (Jessica, 17)

I don't know about this one - about it being an accessory. I guess in a way, yes cause if you're like all dressed nice and you pull out this big old cell phone, it looks really bad. But if you had a phone like that obviously its going to look nice if you pull it out and its ringing and you had it on a table at a fancy dinner or something. So in a way it is an accessory. But not to the point that you're going to match it to your purse and your sunglasses. But yeah, obviously the size and the color.

Why do you think they try and sell them as an accessory?

Cause that's so much what, that's how people think these days. Everything is materialistic, so why not get a phone that's more appealing to the eye? (Vivian, 17)

At the same time as they reject the use of the stereotype that girls are only concerned with their image, they still desire to have the "nicer" product. And that which is "nicer" is defined in very traditionally feminine terms: it is based upon appearance. This desire for the product, although critiqued because of its reflection of a "materialistic" society, is not seen as something to be challenged or rejected, but acquiesced to as a part of lived experience that must be fulfilled.

The second and third pages of the advertisement construct an individualized reader who is "taught" to accept a material culture in which consumption is the key to being cool. Through the form of a teenzine, which relates that you create your own popularity by making the 'right' choices, the cellular phone is presented as an accessory of 'cool'. The text of the advertisement begins with the statement, "Of course your cell phone is an accessory!" Any questions the reader could have are thereby vanquished. Now you know that a cell phone is an accessory, something central to constructing your image as a teen girl, all that is left is choosing which one will be yours. And it is here that the ad will assist you, linking your individuality to the perfect phone. As the ad says, "So many cell phones, so much talk time! Can't decide? Gaze into your deep consciousness and let your astrological sign guide you to the Nokia phone of your destiny."

Thus, we begin with a horoscope section that states, for example, "Fearless Aries can come on strong with an in-your-face Turbo Red Nokia 252, while touch-me Taurus types will appreciate the sensual security of a Nokia 6100 series in Earth tone". As a reader there is something compelling about this advertisement. As a researcher, I tried to examine the advertisement with detachment, but there was something about this format that pulled me in and made me wonder what my sign said my phone should be. Through the ad's use of the horoscope, a discourse that circulates widely in popular

culture, you are called in - for who does not know their sign? And as you are called in, no matter what distance you try to place between yourself and the image, it has still placed you in the position of a consumer of its message, for it has attracted your attention. The use of the horoscope also called the girls into the advertisement, even those who were initially resistant to it. For example Roshni, who said that the ad had too much reading so all she would do is flip through and look at the images if she saw it in a magazine, became immediately engaged when she noticed the horoscope:

> Ooh - a horoscope, let me look for mine. There's mine, I'm Virgo. [reading] 'Virgo will love every perfect little detail about her black Nokia 282 that also conveniently fits into a push-up bra' [laughs]. (Roshni, 16)

As much as Roshni had critiqued the image as talking down to teens and trying to illegitimately sell them cell phones as an accessory, her reaction to the horoscope was fun and enjoyment.

The ad also included a pop quiz so you, the reader, can discover "how Nokia-savvy are you?" and a question and answer section. Through each of these sections the reader is constructed as an individual. They are shown that destiny is out of their control by the horoscope, that competition and results are key by the quiz, and that problems that they may have are problems they alone must solve. It is, in turn, important to note that each of these sections is constructed humorously, as was shown with the horoscope section. Though the surface emphasis of the ad was on having fun and showing cute phones, which the girls focused upon in reading the ad and saw as enjoyable, the other messages that the ad contained were often overlooked.

> Its a good ad and tapping into the whole like astrology thing is kind of weird, but its good cause girls go for that. I like the way they laid it all out like the 'dear Nokia knows' and stuff like that. I like it, I think it's cute.
>
> *Do you think it would influence you if you were buying a phone?*
>
> Yeah, probably it would, cause it makes it look like it's so much fun, but really its just having a phone. But if you can get a phone for your astrological sign you might as well. I don't know its nothing special but, it's cute though. I like it. (Kirsten, 17)

> I like this ad the best so far, except for like the whole 'attention teenage girls'. I get it though, cause its like probably the market that they're looking at, but it's just kind of - but no, I get it. I get why they would do that. Like this one seems like they kind of put a bit of thought into it. Like its still totally - I mean ads are kind of corny or stupid, but its kind of like fun with the whole like 'Fearless Aries can come on strong with the' [laughs]. Its kind of funny, clever, and they do like every sign and I kind of like that, how they point out some of the features and stuff. And its kind of fun with like the whole multiple choice and stuff - makes it a little more fun. And I think it might catch people's attention more, cause it looks like you need to read it, so they might. ... Like usually I don't bother reading ads, but I probably would read this one just to see what it was. (Lindsey, 17)

The advertisement, while presenting having a cellular phone as fun, also presented very traditionally gendered ideas of what should be desirable in choosing a cellular phone, through a set of very traditional speech modes. Through the use of the horoscope, quiz and Dear Nokia, methods of speaking to teens that are long time staples of teenzines are taken up in selling this new technology. Using this format, the cell phone is constructed as a fashion accessory, thus the choice becomes which accessory would look best on them; which would match their image/outfit. Throughout the text, the reader's attention is drawn to the external features of the phone - how small it is, what colors it comes in, what it will match with - over the technical features. When the technical features are mentioned it is in language that assumes a great deal of knowledge about cellular phones, "Hypermodern design and an incredible range of highly advanced features, like a completely internal antenna and DualBand Trimode capability, make the 8800 the phone to be seen with". The advantages of an internal antenna or DualBand Trimode capability are never explored, despite how advantageous and impressive they sound. Rather only the design features and how you can change the color faceplates is explained.

The idea of the cellular phone as an accessory is an essentially feminine construction of technology, for it frames the object not as advanced because of its technical features, but as something that is important purely for its appearance. Thus, as was explored in Chapter 2, women are removed from interaction with technology by

removing their form of use from what are defined as the technical aspects of the object. This interpretation of the cellular phone as accessory, however, is one that the girls deny as being fundamental to why they want or have a cellular phone. Nevertheless, having a nice phone, a cute phone, a tiny phone, is still highly desirable. For the girls, there does exist this desire for a "tiny one" and for "cute" faceplates that are imaged in the ad, which fits closely with a feminine concern with appearance. At the same time the technical features are downplayed and the mode of speech used in the ad is one that is very traditionally feminine. If we return to Goffman's conception of imagining the ad reversed to expose its gender stereotypes, and imagine this ad being presented to teen boys we become aware of the gender ideals it portrays. Would a teen boy be concerned (or expected to be concerned) with his horoscope, or with reading "Dear Nokia" segments that relate what an excellent accessory the phone is? No, more likely what we would expect boys to want, given the cultural construction of masculine interaction with technology, is a more serious mode of presentation that focussed upon the features and user benefits of the tool. Yet, despite this expectation it was much more probable, according to the girls statements, that teen boys would consider their cell phones as accessories than girls. What is interesting to note, however, is that when the girls talk about how their male friends want to have attractive and modified phones, the decoration becomes framed much more actively - as accessorization. Indeed, they seem bewildered by their male friends' obsession, and expenditures, on customizing their cellular phones.

> Like one of the guys spent like $50 more to get his phone in clear plastic instead of black and it lights up when it rings, you know? Like guys always want the better car that's all shined and waxed and stuff like that - their phones have to be all special too. (Kirsten, 17)

> My friend bought his cause you could get like the changing face plate things, he's weird like that. He's like 'yeah, look at this, oh my god and I have this one too!' It's like 'that's good - it's a phone'. And it lights up when it rings, so I'm like 'good, that's excellent.

So you wouldn't want that?

> No, I'd be like 'kay, it works, use it'. I don't know, it doesn't have to look a certain way. It'd be cool to have a little tiny one, but other than that I don't care. (Christina, 16)

Despite the stereotypes of females as being concerned with image it is consistently male friends that are described by the girls as being the one's who are spending time and money on the improvement of the appearance of their phone.

This customization of cellular phones by teens was discussed in an article in the *Edmonton Journal* that focused upon a teenage boy, Bryan Rose, who "started with his bicycle and one day he'll do it to his first car. In the meantime, there's his cell phone to customize" (Howell, May 23, 2000, A1). Bryan, with his cellular phone that has a custom faceplate, vibrating battery, and light-up antenna, is in his words "trying to stick out, you know?" These modifications, which draw attention to the cellular phone, are seemingly something that only boys desire. What the girls state that they want is something 'tiny'. Stephanie, for example, told a number of stories during our conversations of people showing their phones off - all of whom were male. The style of ownership and customization of the technology is fundamentally linked to a masculine use of the technology. When the boys cannot act out their role as producers actively, as they could in the past with the telephone and the creation of their own phone company they turn to tinkering, to changing and personalizing the technological object in whatever way is available.[9] That the boys are producers is maintained in this modified format, while the girls remain consumers who buy and use products off the shelf.

These gender relations to technology are continued and exacerbated within the question and answer section of the Nokia teenzine mock-up.

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[9] See the discussion in Chapter 2 of article on the boys' telephone company that was printed in *Seventeen* magazine in 1960.

> Dear Nokia Knows: I live with this totally charming guy who takes me out all the time. He's very sensitive and talks to me for hours, but I'm desperate for this great to-die-for outfit in Gecko Green. How do I get him to notice that I'm tired of wearing black day after day? Bored in Black
>
> Dear Bored in Black, Are you, by any chance, a Nokia 5100 series cell phone? If so, you're right - you DESERVE a snap-on changeable face plate in Gecko Green. So buzz that man of yours with our loudest Mosquito ring tone and drop him a hint in your text messaging function. And while you've got his attention, a face plate in Antigua Red would really bring out your # key...

The ad, until this point, has consistently addressed a teen girl reader, but with this question and answer it switches it's address to the phone in such a way that the difference between girl and cell phone become blurred. Both are constructed within teenzines as objects to be decorated, objects for which appearance is critical, objects for which the aim is having a man and getting him to do your bidding. Through this parallel the technology is feminized in an attempt to make it appealing to girls: if it is something they can dress up and that will attract the attention of boys, then it is something they should want.

What these images present is not information, but, as Dawn Currie (1999) writes of the advice columns in teenzines, knowledge. Drawing upon Foucault's conceptualization of the relationship between power and knowledge, she explains her strategy of dealing with girls' accounts of teenzines by replacing the notion of text as information, with text as knowledge. She states: "While information implies that readers consciously choose from among available messages according to their needs and interests, knowledge draws attention to the way in which the needs and interests of readers are actively shaped by the text. ... This notion of knowledge thus draws attention to Subject-ivity as process, and allows us to explore the way in which the cultural helps to construct the social" (174). In terms of teenzines this means that the 'problems' that are raised on question pages are those which reinforce cultural norms (194). By focusing upon how to be attractive and how to get your man's attention,

traditionally feminine ideals are affirmed. The norms from which the questions arise are never questioned, but are "taken for granted; the need for beautification does not require explanation because readers already understand it" (194).

Through the question and answer section of magazines a space is, therefore, set up in which the emphasis is placed upon self-scrutiny and self-control. This control works, according to Foucault, through the internalization of the panopticon in the form of self-consciousness. As one internalizes the concerns that the question and answer poses, one comes to judge him/herself relative to the image of the perfect individual whom the magazines promote. Through this self-judgment one is shown the necessity of self-control, for to be perfect one must forever monitor their actions and appearance. This self-control, however, has deeply gendered connections that Foucault did not address. For example, Foucault argues that to achieve the ideal of being a man of virtue one must master the self through austerity. "Austerity is required in the gaining of wisdom, and the method for gaining wisdom is through measure and quantity as they concern the appetites: food, drink and sex" (Bartkowski 1988: 52). Thus the emphasis is upon ensuring that the body does not gain control. But if the feminine body is traditionally understood as being closer to nature and therefore farther from control, does that render it impossible for women to be austere, and therefore virtuous and proper?

More importantly, the lack of acknowledgment of gender relations, along with those of race and class, in Foucault's work is problematic because it ignores the differences in the construction of femininity and masculinity. Indeed the female body would seem a much more obvious body on which to search for mechanisms of self-control, than the male body based on the popular expectations of femininity:

> The woman who checks her makeup half a dozen times a day to see if her foundation has caked or her mascara run, who worries that the wind or rain may

> spoil her hairdo, who looks frequently to see if her stockings have bagged at the ankle or who, feeling fat, monitors everything she eats, has become, just as surely as the inmate of the Panopticon, a self-policing subject, a self committed to relentless self-surveillance. (Bartky 1988: 81)

This self-policing, self-surviellant subject, who constantly focuses on her own actions, creates an incessant need for increased self-knowledge that in turn makes her more controllable. Through the readers interaction with forms of address, such as question and answer, horoscopes and quizzes there is the belief that one is discovering their true self. Unlike criticisms of many media texts and their 'effects' on people, which work through the idea of imitation and ideological presentations of reality, the reader of these sections is also involved in a process other than imitation - that of self-discovery. What this self-discovery implies is "a genuineness because the Subject-ivity which is constructed is to be accepted by the reader as an expression of her 'true' Self" (Currie 1999: 207). The knowledge that one discovers about herself through the teenzine format corresponds with Foucault's identification of self-knowledge about our feelings and thoughts, and its importance in the creation of docile bodies. According to Foucault, today we are in a period of self-scrutiny, first seen in the confessional and then the psychoanalyst's office through which we have come to manage and control not only our behavior, but also the thoughts we have. Thus, as MacDonald notes, "the subject produces herself as a normalized subject whose actions and desires are increasingly knowable and predictable. This subject then becomes ever more available to be used and controlled, thus facilitating the connection between knowledge and power" (cited in Currie 1999: 207). Thus it is through these discourses that the Subject is ever more tied to their own subjugation. As Foucault writes:

> The conclusion would be that the political, ethical, social, philosophical problem of our days is not to try to liberate the individual from the state, and from the state's institutions, but to liberate us both from the state and from the type of individualization which is linked to the state. We have to promote new forms of

> subjectivity through the refusal of this kind of individuality that has been imposed on us for several centuries. (1983: 216)

The advertisements, through their presentation of an individualizing discourse, however, reaffirm the importance of self-control and therefore position the teenage girl reader as a subject of hierarchical power relations. By framing the experience of being a teenage girl as an individual experience and through the placement of great emphasis upon being unique and individual, the commonalties between the experiences of teenage girls are erased. Following the words of Foucault, therefore, there must be an attempt to create awareness of these divisive trends for any change in society to occur. The emphasis upon "being yourself", which is particularly prevalent in youth culture through the proclamations of many icons of youth today, such as Marilyn Manson, should not be read as an unabashedly progressive stance. Rather through this emphasis upon uniqueness, which feeds upon postmodern ideals of difference, all the connections that link individuals through their social location, through the structures of society are overlooked. As Foucault's perspective posits, there needs to be a recognition of both the structural and the individual, such that the construction of the individual is understood as the construction of a docile body that makes "the right choices", rather than an individual who has called upon their "true" identity.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter the second form of visibility that Foucault addresses as controlling our lives through the disciplinary power of the gaze was discussed. This form of visibility, individualizing visibility, is enacted through the cellular phone both through its advertised images and the manner in which it is taken up in lived experience. Through the experience of carrying the phone, in conjunction with the power of surveillance it gains as a tool of parents, the phone becomes a monitoring device that implores its'

teen girl users to make "the right choices". Within advertising, in particular, the cellular phone is constructed not only as a tool for girls, but as an accessory that they can choose to match their individual identity. Thus it is being an individual and constructing, through consumer products, an image and an identity for oneself that is emphasized. This is an individuality that is prominent throughout North American society today, as we emphasize the goals of freedom, personal fulfillment and personal rights. As part of the current digital discourse, use of the cellular phone becomes a tool in a solitary universe where people are freed from all ties and all opportunities are framed as equally accessible to all – you just have to choose them. These ideals, which reflect a postfeminist construction of the current era, however, ignore the continued pressures of domesticity that exist for women. By focusing on the individual, teen girls learn the ideals of postfeminism and the digital discourse that if they are to succeed it must be of their own initiative.

At the same time, however, the girls state that they recognize the marketing strategy of individuality and do not agree with it. The cellular phone, they argue, is not a reflection of who you are, nor is it central to the construction of your identity, as it is presented in the ads. Yet, this rejection of the cellular phone as part of the construction of the image, points to a further belief that all of the girls held, and that the individualizing discourse relies upon, the acceptance of the idea of a true individual identity. That each individual has, at their core, something unique about their identity, was highlighted in their positive reactions to the final advertising image, which began by, as Jessica stated, calling them to attention. It was through the readings which the girls gave of this advertisement, and also the ideals that the ad implied were highly valued, that a number of important contradictions were highlighted. The advertisement gained their attention initially because it spoke directly to them; it called out to them as a

member of a group, as a teenage girl, which highlights their social location. In turn, however, it continued by addressing them as individuals through a set of traditional speech modes (horoscope, quiz, problems page) that are central to teenzines. These forms of address, which work to turn the attention of the reader to herself, remind her of the need to self-monitor in order to fit the ideal image. Yet it is this contradiction between individual and collective, between being yourself and making the right choices, that renders the visibility of individuality so crucial to power. For it places the individual in a position where they are forever looking into their own thoughts and emotions, where they are searching for, and molding into shape their individual identity, without acknowledging the themes that link them to others. Through this position the discourses that surround them, that work to construct that which becomes the "right choice", are rendered safe from examination. Wanting a cute phone, a pretty phone, although materialistic, is not questioned for it has become naturalized. The need to be safe, to be responsible, in turn become factual for the discourses that have rendered these meanings, discourses of femininity and independence and safety, have become "fact" and "truth".

Chapter Six

Some final thoughts...

As I approached the end of this project and was attempting to synthesize the themes to arrive at a "conclusion", I came upon two newspaper articles. Together these two articles highlight the importance of a discursive approach that frames meaning not as determined but as constructed. The first reports the results of a study by British "addiction researchers" who argue that "adolescent smoking is declining sharply [in Britain] because mobile telephones are much hipper with 15-year-olds" (Evanson, *Edmonton Journal*, November 6, 2000, C1). According to the article, the cell phone is replacing the appeal of cigarette smoking with teens because it keeps their hands busy, uses up their disposable income, is a status symbol, and is an important safety measure. The article cites the researchers, "we argue that the mobile phone is an effective competitor to cigarettes in the market for products that offer teenagers adult style, individuality, sociability, rebellion, peer group bonding and adult aspiration". Thus, these researchers conceptualize the cellular phone as a replacement for smoking because the cellular phone fulfills the same symbolic space that made smoking desirable. Indeed, as they describe what the cellular phone offers teens, the technology becomes a representation of youth.

The second article, also based in research from Britain, is entitled "The Cell Phone as Date Bait" (Angier, *Edmonton Journal*, November 12, 2000, E11). According to this study, the "ambitious young lads of Liverpool ... regard their mobile phones less as practical business tools than as handy little mate lures". Through a set of observations made in a local pub on 23 evenings over the course of four-months it was observed that 32 per cent of the men used and openly displayed a cell phone, while only 13 per cent of the women customers did. This difference, as interpreted by these researchers, does not reflect that men are more likely to own or use cellular phones, but

rather it is seen to stem from a biologically determined need to attract a mate. The article states: "as the researchers see it, the men are using their mobile phones as peacocks use their immobilizing feathers and male bullfrogs use their immoderate croaks: To advertise to females their worth, status and desirability".

In both reports what was, for me, particularly problematic was their reliance upon essential categories, in the former of youth and in the latter of gender, as the impetus of the particular form technological use. In the second article, particularly, an interesting contrast is set up. The cell phone is recognized as constructed (women and men use it in different ways to achieve their own ends), but gender is understood as permanent and biologically determined (men use it to strut, to show how they are important and therefore desirable; women do not need to do this as they have the choice of whom will be their mate). Geoffrey Miller, an evolutionary psychologist who responded to the study, states his agreement with the importance of the cellular phone for status. Carrying a cell phone, according to Miller, gives the owner status because it points to, "social importance, and the fact that you're plugged into a social network and are important enough to be able to be reachable at all times". According to the argument, however, this is something which only men must desire, for women do not display their cell phones in the same way. Hence, in these texts of academia that are represented in the popular press, the cellular phone becomes a tool that is shaped by the innate drives of people who are determined and defined both by their gender and their age. The only aspect that remains variable is the technology, which is reduced to its symbolic value, to being only a referent not a tool.

Thus, my "conclusion" begins from my questioning of these two articles' conceptions of technology, gender, and youth. Throughout this project the aim has been to explore how the telephone and cellular phone become meaningful to teenage girls in a way that frames this relationship not as static and determined, but as discursively

formed and therefore variable. Throughout the chapters, a number of discourses have been explored in describing how the telephone and cellular telephone are both imaged as used by teenage girls and how a group of girls report their own use. What it is to be female in Canada at the present moment, what it means to be a youth, even what it is we believe technology does for us, have been presented not as natural and determined, but as constructed and contested discourses. At the same time as these categories were addressed others, such as race, sexual orientation, and class, all issues which deeply impact the individual experience, were put to the side. Hopefully only for the moment. Thus, rather than asserting that the way the phone and cellular phone are idealized and used is an outcome of the natural processes of being female, or of being young, I have tried to show them as constructed in relation to the socio-historical moment. If, for example, the cellular phone is taken up because it enables girls to be independent, to rebel, to assert themselves, I have attempted to look beyond, to what they rebel against and to what end this individuality works.

Thus I want to re-assert what the aims of this project have been. They have not been to find "the truth" about being a teen girl and having a cell phone or using the phone at home. They have not been to show the images presented of youth and of femininity in popular culture texts as a "reflection" of being a teen. Rather, the aims have been to explore and question how teenage girls' use of technology is constructed and to underscore how this is impacted by traditional ideas of femininity and youth.

I began this thesis with two guiding questions: What do idealizations of the telephone and cellular phone, presented in advertisements, reveal about being a teenage girl? How do the representations of public / private sphere divisions of parental control / independence relate to the lived experiences of the users? In attempting to answer these questions, I looked to advertising images of the telephone and cellular phone that were presented in teenzines and I spoke to girls and asked them about how

and why they used these technologies, and what they believed the advertising images suggested. In attempting to relate this, I have framed the research through a number of themes, such as public and private spheres, independence, and individuality, which were the dominant, but certainly not the only, topics that arose from the texts. By conceptualizing these relations as discursive and drawing upon the work of Foucault, I have presented the relations not as determined and unalterable, but rather have suggested that they should be read as reflections of power and resistance. In doing so, however, I have attempted to continually return to the structures, to frame experience not as freely chosen, but as influenced by the intersection of ideals and social locations. Thus, while being discursive does point to the constructed and socially specific nature of these experiences and idealizations, one's social interactions and uses of technology are not freely chosen. Rather how gender and technology, youth and freedom, fear and safety, the home and the street, are experienced and imaged is as "real" - as concrete and as natural.

At the same time, it should be recognized that these discourses are neither solid nor fully controlling and that they do not impact every individual in the same way or to the same extent. Thus, to create an awareness of the tensions between the ideal and the individual and to forward a critical metatheoretical position that attempts to avoid the poles of structure and agency, I included both the advertising images and the interviews. In doing so, I have used Foucault's conceptualization of power to show that, while the meanings of the technological objects and the ways they are expected to be used are shaped by the social structure and hegemonic relations, they can be resisted. I believe that, given the centrality of youth to this discussion, it would be impossible to ignore resistance, for resist is what sociologists claim that youth "do". However, this conception of youth is altered by gender – again highlighting the shifting and variable nature of social relations that validates a conception of relations as discursive.

In taking a perspective where meaning is conceived of as constructed through discourse, there is always the potential for challenge, for the development of counter-discourses. The way in which women appropriated the telephone is a critical example of this. As a technology it was invented, produced and marketed to be a tool of the public world, the male world. Despite this conception, which was promoted in advertisements, women readily took the phone up in the private sphere. For in the home, the telephone was a tool that helped women with their duties of caretaking, while giving them a link to the outside world. Yet, this (mis)use that women made of the phone must be recognized as a change only to the definitions of the technology, for the type of use remains clearly within traditional gender definitions.

What the change in the gendered meanings of the phone points to, most importantly, is the potential for the meanings of technologies to be altered and constructed to new ends. In turn, gender itself should be recognized as alterable – that which is public and that which is private framed not as innate and natural but as alterable and contextual. It is through this contextualist framework, which was chosen over the essentialism of both liberal feminism and ecofeminism, that the relationship between gender and technology was addressed. Indeed, if the relationship of gender and technology is understood as a reflection of hegemonic relations of power it must also be accepted as inherently alterable. Thus, a constructivist position is inherently political, for it creates the opportunity for change.

It is important, however, not to frame this potential for change as negating the prescriptions of use that do exist. This is clearly reflected in the gendered ideals that are presented through the uses of the telephone and cellular phone shown in advertisements and described by the girls. Over the forty years, from which the ads analyzed were taken, there was a surprisingly small shift in ideals, given the popular conception of increasing equality and feminist ideals. For example, the ads of the 1960s,

particularly those for Bell telephones, created a clear image of domestic femininity for girls. They imaged girls calling home to see if there was anything mother needed, and calling their friends to tell them about their "New Princess phone", their cute little cousins, and the boy on television. The image of the world presented here was one in which leisure took place in the home and where being courteous and polite were idealized. As a girl reader, you learned your role in the home, your caretaking duties, and your place as a consumer.

Remarkably, little has changed between these ideals reflected in the ads of the 1960s and the ideals of today. What shifts did occur, such as the move in advertisements during the 1970s to include more feminist values, were later reversed. The images of the 1980s and the 1990s present a return to the home and to traditional idealizations of gender, which reflect the "American Dream". Yet, a tension exists in these images, which present both individually achieved success and power as the goal, alongside the need to be feminine. These current images construct a world in which there are no limitations and every girl is an independent individual. In turn, the values of feminism are subverted by a postfeminist presentation where equality becomes a commodity that can be purchased through a set of products that signify independence, such as the cellular phone.

The trend towards individualism, which is reflected in the current Nokia cellular phone ads, is also present in the advertisements discussed from the 1980s, such as the Maidenform, Jockey and Dole advertisements. In each of these advertisements, the technological user is imaged as being the producer of her own destiny. If she is to succeed, either in business, as a successful model, or at being a popular teen, she must take the steps to accomplish her goals herself. These idealized images, which originate from a liberal feminist presentation of success, create a situation where all the factors that limit, such as the demands of the domestic world, disappear. Indeed this reliance

upon oneself moves even further in the current ads, for it is no longer just a matter of choosing to be successful that is presented, but of choosing your identity.

An outcome of this focus on choice and individuality, in the idealizations of advertisements, has been that structural constraints are rendered unimportant and invisible. Any differences that exist between males and females, adults and teens, rich and poor, etc., become framed as either the outcome of choices or as natural. The second of the two articles discussed at the beginning of this chapter, exemplifies this construction of difference as "natural". Men, it argues, use the cellular phone in a different way than women because of their biological urges. Indeed, there is no difference in how a man shows off his cell phone and how a peacock displays his feathers. The degree to which we, as readers, rely upon this type of socially constructed idea of what is natural and normal, versus deviant and abnormal, becomes clear when we take up Erving Goffman's suggestion to switch the genders of the individuals modeled in the ad. To present a teenage boy sitting at the bottom of a flight of stairs, phone in one hand and mirror in another, worrying about his image would seem "wrong". Or to imagine a man, dressed up as a raver or a hippie or as "salsa piquant", each carefully preened and sexually seductive, would not "make sense". This conception of what is natural is not only something that is created in popular culture images, it is something that we live. When the girls were asked, for example, to explain how their use of the phone was different from that of their male friends it was to nature that they turned: "Girls just like to talk more", "boys aren't phone people". The phone is a tool through which to share feelings and emotions, something that the girls believe boys do not do.

It must be noted, however, that as much as these images and lived experiences rely upon hegemonic ideas of what is "natural", what is constructed as natural does shift over time. Imagining the six page Nokia advertisement of the variety of images that

follow from having a particular cellular phone with a male model rather than Niki Taylor is much more acceptable today than it may have been in the past. From the images discussed from the 1960s to those of today, there is certainly a broadening of the meaning of "teenage girl" and a loosening of the boundaries of what is acceptable for those whom it defines. No longer are teenage girls shown as bound to home and family, no longer are they imaged as only caring about boyfriends and popularity. Rather parents and domestic duties have disappeared, and the emphasis has moved from consuming technology to be popular to consuming technology to be more "you". Yet, the focus upon being an individual today should not be seen as a rejection of popularity. Rather individuality has become a means by which to be popular - for being an individual is usually played out as being decidedly similar to all of your friends. Thus a contradiction exists wherein the girl is being sold the importance of being unique, of having her own identity, while simultaneously being sold the importance of being feminine and of fitting in. Being an individual comes to mean, more than anything else, that you see yourself as isolated, such that the links that tie you to others based on your social location, are erased.

The continuity in values and gender expectations that underlie these images is most striking, however, in its stability. It is still, according to the ads, girls who consume products and girls who are focused upon their image. The extent of this lack of change is reflected in the girls' reactions to the advertisements of the 1960s which they found, despite their "old-fashioned language", to be the most "realistic". These ads, they stated, showed the ways that they used the phone – to call friends and tell them about who asked you to the prom. The current advertisements for the cellular phone, in contrast, did not resonate with their experiences. According to the girls, the cellular phone is a tool not, as the ads present it, a fashion accessory.

Whereas in advertising the phone is generally imaged to support very traditional feminine roles, the cellular phone is used to signify being current and in-demand. As the article cited above suggests, it appears as the cigarette of the new millennium.[1] Having a cellular phone is cool and "adult-like", such that it becomes an object for display and status that, like the cigarette, symbolizes rebellion and youthful yearning for independence. In advertisements, it is imaged with girls as a tool of fun, adventure and self-discovery. The advertisement for Dollhouse clothing, for example, which drew upon the image of *Charlie's Angels*, presented being young and having technology as fun and exciting. Like the recently released movie, it presents an image that is in many ways very positive, for it presents women, who use only their physical strength and intelligence, to fight danger. Yet, although this may be a more progressive image than the damsel in distress, it is nothing that the James Bond girls have not always done. Indeed, what it relies upon is the presentation of a set of beautiful women, who may be strong, but are still primarily sexual bodies in the eyes of the male (and dominant) viewer. Hence, while it may be that the surface presents a revolutionary image, the gender ideals upon which the image relies are traditional and unwavering. Beauty is the ideal. Being fun and adventurous can only be second to looking good. Self-reliance in the face of danger can only exist in the world of fantasy.

With the cellular phone come the ideals of the "digital discourse" and the current conceptualization of our world and our lives as radically changing. The digital discourse, as theorized by Melanie Stewart-Millar (1998), is a popular discourse that conceives of

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[1] Although to state that youth are stopping smoking because of the popularity of cellular phones would be, I believe, to confound the relationship. There may be a statistically correlation between the two trends, but it is highly problematic to read this as a causal relationship. It would seem equally plausible that years of campaigning on the negative health outcomes of smoking and the increased cost of cigarettes may be as influential, if not more influential, in the decrease of teens smoking than the cellular phone.

lived experience as postmodern, as fluid and shifting, without any recognition of the actual structures that still confine people. Gender is idealized as no longer being a boundary, for we can be freed of our bodies. With this physical freedom, we are theoretically able to do anything. Yet, what this perception ignores, is that the ways in which tasks are divided between the genders has rarely had its basis in the physical. Rather the division of labor has stemmed from a culturally situated perception of tasks as gendered through the assignment of value based upon who does the work.

Central to any discussion of gender and technology must be an acknowledgment of the division of our current market society into public and private spheres. Through the (fluid) boundary between these spheres important associations of power are displayed and played out, such that what is done by women is framed as private, rendering it less powerful. The use of the telephone to procure goods and maintain family ties, because it is done by women, is therefore designated as less integral and relegated to the private sphere. Even when the telephone is moved out of the private sphere, if women use it, it is framed in traditionally feminine terms. What the images presented to girls show proper use of the telephone in the public sphere to be is polite, courteous and helpful. This theme runs from the 1960s through today. A woman's use of the phone is never assertive nor demanding, it is delicate and concerned with the well-being of others.

The telephone is central to the division of spheres not only because of the types of tasks it is constructed as being central to, but also because of the ways in which it can be used to create spaces of resistance within the private sphere. Indeed, for girls, a key to the desirability of the telephone is the space of privacy within the family home it can create. The telephone, therefore, becomes central to the culture of the bedroom, such that the girl can stay in contact with friends while remaining safe from the threats of the street. With the telephone, girls have a way to subvert the demands that the private sphere imposes, for it creates a space where they cannot be fully controlled, where they

have some freedom and privacy. The threat of this privacy and the freedom it may enable, are reflected in the negative reactions to the boundary blurring of the Internet. As the Internet enters / penetrates the household it theoretically creates a gap, a space where the public and private can flow freely. It is this space that makes the Internet so contentious and in need of surveillance.[2]

One of the most interesting tensions between the advertised ideals and the lived experiences is the use of both the cellular phone and the telephone as tools of safety. During the interviews, the theme of safety arose repeatedly in exploring the relationship between teenage girls and the technologies. The idea that the public world is dangerous for teenage girls ran through all of the discussions and was seen by each individual as a legitimate reason for the rules that restrict their movement out of the house, and led to their reliance upon the telephone. Thus, it is through the phone that the boundary between the private and public sphere can, in part, be negotiated, for it enables them to engage in the leisure of communication with their friends while remaining safe. With the cellular phone the boundary between public and private can, theoretically, be overcome. By carrying the phone with her, the girl can ideally participate in the public world, while forever being tied to the private world.

But this use of the technology for safety, and the threats of the outside world, are invisible in idealized images. The need for technology to keep them safe is promoted, however, through the "natural" constructions of gender which are presented. If being feminine is being delicate and sweet and kind then, given how dangerous the world outside is constructed as being, there must be something that can protect them and

[2] It must be noted that the potential for the blurring of boundaries is limited, due to these very same definitions of gender.

keep them safe. Thus, the need for the cellular phone and its "safety" is unconsciously re-affirmed.

The safety that the cellular phone provides, or is believed to provide, was explored as a form of synoptic visibility. In doing so I have argued that, through the cellular phone, it is not safety, but knowledge, that is imparted. The daughter is not inherently any safer, but the parents are relieved of worry – they are given the tool by which to monitor and control their daughter's behaviour at a distance. This power that the parents have is not a power of force or of coercion, but a power through knowledge. What the cellular phone provides is a tool by which to curb, from a distance, the desire of youth: freedom and independence. Through this technology, which is carried because of the parent's desires, detailed knowledge and information is acquired of the teen girls location and activities. With a cellular phone in your purse you know that mom can call at any moment, to check up on you, to see that you are okay. And even if mother will not know precisely what you are doing, you still have the reminder of her concern – and her trust – which you have learned not to dismiss. And in turn, once you accept the ability of those with power over you to know your whereabouts at any moment, you begin to monitor your own behavior.

Yet, the cellular phone is not, as mentioned above, sold as a safety device. Rather its marketing relies upon images of traditional femininity to connote the delicacy of being female which renders one in need of support and protection. But given the desire for independence by teens this delicacy cannot be directly imaged, for everyone wants to be the tough Charlie's Angel, not the weak and submissive Barbie. Thus, the advertisements rely upon a different device, upon selling the cellular phone as an accessory. This works in two ways. First, the advertisements create a desire for the product with teenage girls. As it is believed that the need to assert your "individuality", while gaining peer acceptance, is highly valued by girls, the cellular phone is sold as a

product that is both something that "everyone has" and something that can set you apart. It thus becomes a symbol of your individuality, which is something that the owner will paradoxically want to display in order to "fit in". This display works towards the second outcome of the advertisements. As girls perceive certain phones as "cool" and projecting their "individuality", they ask their parents to buy them a particular phone. In turn, the parents, by purchasing the "hip" cell phone for their daughter have the certainty that she will happily carry it everywhere with her. Thus, as an accessory, both the desires of parent (knowledge) and of daughter (hip object) are fulfilled, while traditional relations of power are maintained.

This gaze of surveillance that the cellular phone provides, however, is not accepted without question. Rather the technology is used to engage in resistance, albeit mild in comparison to that which is popularly associated with youth. The possibilities for resistance that the cellular phone and telephone present the girls is not the resistance of the "spectacular" subcultures. It is not visually startling nor is it dramatic. Instead, it arises from the misuse of commercial goods. Through the telephone, a private space is created for self-expression and leisure within the confines of the domestic sphere. Through the cellular phone, the girls can gain access to the public sphere and a sense of independence. They can waste their parents' minutes, they can distort the information given, and they can refuse to answer its ring. Each of these acts creates a space, however small, for resistance to the demands of family. Through a counter-discourse of youth these technologies are reconfigured and made to fit into the drive for freedom central to current ideas of both being a teen and owning technology.

At the same time, however, the girls' deviations never vary from what would be acceptable to traditional femininity. They may lie about where they are or whom they are with, but they still call, they still carry the cell phone, because they have accepted the gendered discourse that frames them as being at risk. They "understand" and respect

their parents concerns about their safety, in fact they see the threats their parents warn them about as very real threats. Indeed, they concede that the cellular phone makes them "feel safer", even if they hate the knowledge that it gives to their parents.

Yet it is having the opportunity to resist, to use the technological objects in ways that are not what parents, or marketers, or manufacturers desire, that is most important in the relationship between girls and the telephone and cellular phone. There may be a number of structures that surround the girls and limit their lives, but these forces of power are not forces that are uncontested. These structures are not so impervious that they cannot be dented. As girls use the technologies in unexpected ways, they highlight the degree to which they do have choices. Thus there is the potential for the girls, through consumer objects and technology, to rebel against how they are defined, categorized and classified.

What this potential for misuse highlights is the extent to which technology, gender and youth are all discursively constructed and thus have meanings that can never be fully determined. These terms, nevertheless, impact the lives of individuals in ways that are very "real", for it is through their meanings that we understand what is accepted and desired of others and of ourselves. By using the two methods, and focusing upon the constructed nature of social reality, I have attempted to bridge the space between subjectivist and objectivist positions, such that the experience of being a teenage girl is recognized as both socially structured and individually experienced. Yet there is, in this exploration, no final conclusion that I have reached, no "Truth" that can be related to the reader. Indeed, it is this inability to find an objective truth that I would like to leave with the reader, for it forces us to recognize our situations as constructed not as natural, and therefore as inherently alterable.

This project, due to limitations of time, has left many relations unaddressed that would be very interesting explore. How race impacts use, or sexual orientation

influences the acceptance of the idealized images, being examples of two links that could be questioned in exploring constructions of technological use that are currently invisible in the academic literature. Another question would be the ways that an individual's socio-economic status impacts having a phone. During the interviews, the idea that having a cell phone had once been a status symbol, because of its cost, but no longer had such connotations was invoked by several of the girls. Yet, all of these girls came from families that had the means to afford the technology. Whether such a conceptualization would hold for girls who do not have the same class background would be an interesting relation to explore, which would again highlight the constructed nature of the technology. There was also a perception expressed by a number of the girls that there were correct and incorrect ways to use the technology, often ways that were tied up with gender, indeed often ways that denigrated their own use. In the future, it would be very useful to explore how these ideas come to fruition in more detail, and to include interviews with males to explore their reactions and perceptions of "what is correct".

In drawing upon the idea of youth, gender and technology as discursively constructed I am sent back to the work of Liesbet Van Zoonen (1988) in which I first read of the conceptualization of technology as culturally constructed through discourse. From her writing, numerous other routes that this research could, and perhaps should, follow are suggested. Two aspects of the way in which technology becomes meaningful that she addressed, but which I was unable to question with regard to teenage girls and the telephone / cellular phone are the production of the technologies and the way they are represented in institutional settings, such as schools. Such a focus, I believe, would create an even greater sense of the technologies, a sense that would continue bridging the gap between structure and agency. Another aspect that she suggested, but which I only briefly touched upon was the historical. This aspect, potentially more than any

other, is crucial in today's climate of technology worship. For as we study technology through history and question how it has become a part of and is shaped by culture, the extent to which technological objects are perceived to create change is shown to be rhetoric. Through the recognition of this rhetoric, the continuities of power that maintain social hierarchies are unveiled, which creates the opportunity for new constructions of youth, gender and technology.

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Appendix - Methods

The methods that were used within this research were derived from an article by Liesbet Van Zoonen (1992) in which she explored the ways in which technology becomes meaningful with regards to gender in contemporary western society. In this article she argues that, if we accept gender and technology as both being discursively constructed, the most appropriate form of research would be "the analysis of specific cases in which NICTs [new information and communication technology] have met or will meet" (26). In doing so she argues that we look to the "articulations of technological discourse" (26) which include the original design, the services, marketing, media attention, and actual patterns of use. Through these multiple elements the ways in which a particular technology is constructed can be questioned and critiqued. Within this work, due to time and scope, I chose to focus upon two sites of construction, that of advertising and of use. In doing so two methods were incorporated, a semiotic analysis of advertisements and qualitative interviews. Through the dual methods I was also able to incorporate approaches that focused both upon the ideological level of meaning making (advertising) and the subjective level of choice (interviews). Thus, as Shulamith Reinharz (1992) argues, it is easier to see the links between individual woman and the broader complex of issues, as both agent and structure where incorporated (204). By including a reading of the advertisements during the interviews I was also, importantly, able to gain a richer interpretation of the images.

Analysis of Advertisements

The first method was the collection and analysis of the advertisements. The advertisements presented were collected primarily from fashion and beauty magazines oriented to teenage girls, or what Dawn Currie (1999) has termed "teenzines" (41). The

images that were first collected were located in a group of widely available teenzines: *CosmoGirl, Seventeen, Teen,* and *YM.* The publication dates of the magazines that were sampled was between January 1999 and November 2000.[1] As there were only limited numbers of images that used the telephone or cellular phone, and the images found were often repeated, I expanded the scope of collection to magazines to fashion magazines more broadly. Doing so was supported both by the research of Dawn Currie (1999), who found that large numbers of the girls she interviewed read magazines such as *Vogue* and *Mademoiselle* in addition to teenzines (150), and also the reports of girls whom I interviewed. Thus the magazines which were looked at expanded to include *Cosmopolitan, Flare, Mademoiselle,* and *Vogue.* For comparison, images were also collected from men's magazines (*Maxim, FMH*), business magazines (*The Financial Post, The Economist*), general interest (*McLean's, Life*) and news sources (*Edmonton Journal*). A more comprehensive review and collection was done for images from the 1960s until today. All of theses images were collected from *Seventeen,* which has been termed the "queen" of teenzines due to its lengthy publishing history. The issues from 1960, 1965, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985 and 1990 were all comprehensively examined and all images of telephones found were reproduced. Also more general notes based on observations of trends in the magazine content were made.

The representations that were chosen were based upon the inclusion of the image of a telephone or cellular phone. The telephone/cellular phone did not have to be the product, indeed in the majority of images it was a prop in the act of selling another object. Of the approximately 150 advertisements that were collected, 34 have been

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[1] Unfortunately, not every issue of each magazine was analyzed due to the difficulty of collecting the magazines that had been published before the project was decided upon. The magazines are, seemingly, very popular at the public libraries and have a tendency to be severely damaged.

included with this thesis. Further elaboration of their origins can be found in a listing of images in the primary source bibliography. The manner in which the images were selected for inclusion from the total represented both what themes they reflected and how well they portrayed the particular themes that I have chosen to focus upon. In order to frame this I created a table of each advertising image that was collected. This table was derived from a method described by Bourdieu (1992) in which he proposes making a square table of "the pertinent properties" to which new properties are added every time you find a new idea. In this way, each image is questioned by the absence/presence of the same qualities (230). In doing so I grouped the images by year and "rated" each in terms of their applicability to a number of themes, such as domesticity, work, dating, fashion, independence. In choosing which ads to focus upon I returned to those ads that most strongly displayed the characteristics that had remained stable over time, changed a great deal, or were prominent in the interviews.

Although there was some comparison of themes, the rating scheme adapted was not a content analysis. Unlike a content analysis it was not objects at the denotative level that were being counted and compared, for example I did not count the number of times boyfriends were referred to by the text. I am not, therefore, attempting to argue that the themes that are discussed have been done so because their repetition means that they are more important or significant. Rather a theme such as dating was explored in terms of the heterosexual norms that it relied upon, for example, was the girl waiting by the phone? Or was the focus upon being friends not love interests? Hence, the questions that I asked of the images and upon which they were compared were at the connotative level of themes, rather than the denotative level of objects. Indeed, it would be inaccurate for me to make any claims about what the majority of ads at a particular time presented, for the images chosen were not systematically sampled.

Despite the lack of statistical "representativeness", the images were still, I believe, suggestive of their representative times. Erving Goffman (1979) brings up an important point in regards to the representativeness of ads: although the image may depict a theme, it does not "prove" anything about what is found in the picture. To make such an assertion would be to generalize to a scope beyond that which is justified. What the ads used within this thesis were, however, chosen for is their ability to "jog thoughts" on gender representations and how these may be related to lived behaviors (Goffman 1979: 24). What the images show are ideas that are accepted, that are "normal", and it is this normalcy and naturalness about them that is in turn the object of scrutiny.

Advertisements were also taken into the interviews, all but one of these is included in the thesis. The ads chosen for the interviews were overwhelmingly contemporary images that represented particular themes that I was interested in and wanted to see played out with the technology's users. Ads that were both aimed towards teenagers and towards an adult audience were included for comparison, as were two images from 1960. Because of the exploratory nature of the project a fairly broad range of images were included, but this broad range was also very beneficial for it created a space where it was possible for a variety of reactions and conceptions of the technology to be expressed.

Due to the focus upon the connotative level, rather than the denotative level of a quantitative content analysis, the manner in which the images were analyzed was one that highlighted their ideological meanings. Although people certainly can and do read media in resistive and appropriative ways (Fiske 1989) the majority of consumers do not avoid the pressures and ideals that advertising portrays. This is not to argue that people lack agency but rather that the ads reflect the desires that are deeply embedded in people through their socialization into the hegemonic structures. Following this idea,

Robert Goldman (1992) argues that "ads offer a unique window for observing how commodity interests conceptualize social relations" (2).

The perspective that was taken up was predominantly a semiotic reading of ads. Semiotics itself is the study of signs. Ellen McCracken (1993) gives a clear description of how signs work and how they are distorted within advertising:

> The sign "gold", for example, is composed of a signifier, "g-o-l-d" and a signified, the mental concept this signifier produces. In mythic language (which includes advertising and other mass cultural representations) the entire sign of ordinary language becomes merely the signifier in what Barthes termed a second-order sign system. The ordinary sign g-o-l-d / concept of gold, for example, has come to be a signifier in other semiotic chains, producing new signifieds such as wealth and success. (77)

The aim of a semiotic analysis of advertising is to "demythologize" the images - to show them not as natural and timeless but as "a type of speech chosen by history" (Barthes cited in McCracken 1993: 77).

One of the most influential pieces on the semiotics of advertising is Judith Williamsons' *Decoding Advertisements* (1978). This work is organized around the idea that "ads provide a structure which is capable of transforming the language of objects into that of people and vice versa" (12). Currently, Williamson argues, there is little difference between the brands of products presented in the market - what advertisements must therefore do is create an image for the product (24). In explaining this process she uses the example of two perfume ads, each with different actresses, and the product image each ad creates. The first is an ad for Chanel No.5, where the perfume is compared to Catherine Deneuve. There are two signifiers in this image, the perfume and the woman. What occurs is the transmission of that which is signified by one to the other. Catherine Deneuve, who is a recognized actress, is associated with glamour. This glamour (the signified) is transferred to the perfume - such that Chanel No.5 gains the signified of glamour. In both cases we are working with second-order

signs. The products, as signifiers, then come to convey much more than they concretely denote through associations made through the referent system. This referent system exists as the body upon which advertisers and audiences draw in making the image, and making it meaningful. In order for them to read, or decode, it adequately - such that the meaning is transferred - requires that the advertisers have correctly encoded the message, by giving it meanings that are available to the audience.

Over time these links in meaning come to take on an objective or independent status, what Williamson terms the "objective correlative" (29). Because the system appears to be made up of "logical" connections and similarities, it is read as "real" or "natural". The aim in deconstructing ads is therefore to try and break apart these "natural" and "logical" connections to show the ways in which they are formulated and what power relations they draw upon. By breaking down the relationships between objects or people and objects imaged together the meanings that the ad is drawing upon can be questioned. As Leiss, Kline and Jhally (1990) state:

> This does not mean that ads merely reflect reality. Although they draw their materials from everyday life, they select them carefully; much is included, but also much is omitted. By choosing only some things and by reintegrating them into the meaning system of advertising, *ads create new meanings*. (216)

In conclusion, the images were read thematically to discern the similarities and tensions they held, which were in turn related to the users' experiences.

Interview Data

The second aspect of the study was a set of in-depth interviews with eleven girls between the ages of fourteen and seventeen. Although this was fewer girls than was initially anticipated (15-20) it was found that after these interviews there were few new topics/perspectives being introduced. This may have been a reflection of the relative similarity of the girls' backgrounds which was, I believe, an outcome of my sampling

method (snowball sample). My hope had been to have girls involved from a broad-range of socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds, and thus I had initially approached as wide a group of people as possible for references to teenage girls. The teenage girls who were approached included girls whom I previously knew, girls referred by friends who were already participating, or girls suggested by an older friend or family member. Although the sampling method did pose some problems, due to the similar backgrounds of the girls, I believe that it was adequate given the exploratory nature of the work and the focus upon gender and youth. In future research it may be necessary for a more purposive method of sampling to be undertaken in order to involve the voices of girls with a wider range of life experiences.

The girls who were recruited all lived in the greater Edmonton area, including three girls from St. Albert. The families of nine of the eleven girls fit into a "traditional - nuclear" family arrangement, with both parents married and living together with the children. For the other two, one's parents had divorced and both remarried, and the other's parents were both deceased and she was under the custody of her oldest sister and brother-in-law. Ten of the eleven girls interviewed were of Caucasian descent, with two of Mediterranean descent, the eleventh girl was of East Indian descent. In the group, seven came from families with (at least) one professional parent with a university education, two from families with one parent in a skilled occupation requiring post-secondary education, and two from parents working in the trades. Given the high proportion of girls with university educated parents it is hard to argue that these girls are a "representative" sample. At the same time, there is nothing to suggest that they were not "ordinary" girls.

Given the nature of the research, none of the issues addressed were outside of the course of normal conversation and nothing was covert, thus there were no ethical

problems. In the consent forms, and the proposal submitted to the ethics review committee, the importance of confidentiality and the individual's rights as a participant, were highlighted. Nothing was hidden in the research and at no time were the girls pressured to answer any questions they did not appear comfortable with. Contract forms were developed for both participants and parents, which outlined: that the interview would be tape-recorded; their statements held in strictest confidence; all information would be kept anonymous; their right to withdraw at any time; and their right to have the interview destroyed at any time upon their request. Both the girls and the parents signed copies of the contract in duplicate, one for themselves and one for me. During the interviews, no ethical issues arose. At the conclusion, they were again reminded that the interview would be kept confidential but if they, or their parents, had any concerns to contact me. Both the parents and the girls were also informed that an aspect of the confidentiality was that the parents would not be able to have access to their daughter's statements.

Initial contact with the girl was a phone call to their home to explain the project and see if they would be interested in participating. If they agreed to participate I then asked to speak with a parent/guardian, if home, to explain the project to them and see when a time could be set up to meet with both the daughter and the parent. The majority of the meetings were set up in the girl's home, so that I could first meet with her parents to review the explanatory statement and have them sign a form of consent for their daughter's to participate. Parental consent was required given that the girls were minors and therefore unable to officially give informed consent.

The interviews conducted were in-depth qualitative interviews. Although an interview guide was developed and roughly followed, it deviated a great deal depending on the girl and her interests. Slightly different questions were asked of the girls with,

and the girls without cell phones, but the majority were the same. Each interview began with an inquiry about demographics, such as age, grade, and parents' occupations. This was followed by a set of questions used to both gain some insight into their lives generally and to build a rapport. These questions, following the work of Maureen Baker (1985), focused upon their everyday lives and activities. The use of the telephone was then discussed, followed by the cellular phone. In discussing use of the technologies both how they used them and what interactions with their parents took place because of them were addressed. Questions regarding the cell phone also frequently delved into the image of the cell phones and their popularity as status symbols. Once a good rapport was set up and I had a general sense of their use of the technologies the advertisements were introduced. Here, as Dawn Currie (1999) argues, as little prompting as possible was done so as not to bias or direct their attention. This section was, as she also found, both the most difficult and the most fruitful part of the interview (109). I concluded each interview with the same two questions (although they were probed in different manners). The first was what they thought life would be like without the [cellular] telephone; the second was if they thought their lives would be the same if they were male. These questions created, I found, a space where the girls spoke more critically because it was removed from their experience. Although most qualitative methods books stress the importance of a focus on behavior, I found that by concluding with a section that focused upon beliefs, interesting tensions could be seen between their readings of images, life experiences, and ideals.

At the conclusion of the interview each girl was thanked and reminded of the confidentiality of the interview. I also asked her to contact me if she would be interested in seeing the thesis when it was completed. Each interview was then transcribed from tape using pseudonyms. I have kept the tapes used during each interview, along with

the consent forms, but there is nothing to connect the two and no way to trace the girls to their statements within the thesis.

After all of the interviews were transcribed, they were coded into a number of general themes using the program Nudist. The themes that they were broken into arose out of the interviews. The interviews were then gone over a second time to ensure that all interviews were coded through the same set of themes. These themes were broadly based on private/public sphere; independence/control; isolation; heterosexuality; producer/consumer; fashion; identity; uses. These themes were also related to those that had been used to categorize the advertisements. Because of this similarity between ads and interview themes comparison was also made easier. These themes were also crucial in the writing of the thesis, for it was those that involved the most overlap and discrepancy between the ads and interviews that were drawn upon.